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RICHARD HARRISON
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The Story of
London's Police

by

RICHARD HARRISON

With 22 Illustrations

HERE IS A NEW AND AUTHENTIC work that will appeal to all who take an interest and pride in the Police Forces of London.

Richard Harrison, who has had long experience as an author and journalist, has spared no pains to provide a complete survey of his subject, and the result is a book that covers every aspect of Police work in the Metropolis, from the regulation of traffic to the latest murder hunt.

He has been privileged to see the Police both in training and in action, and he has watched them at work in the Yard's laboratories, in the Communication Room, to which come the "999" messages, in the Courts, and on the river.

To complete his subject he has studied the legal aspects of preparing and presenting a criminal

(Continued on back flap)




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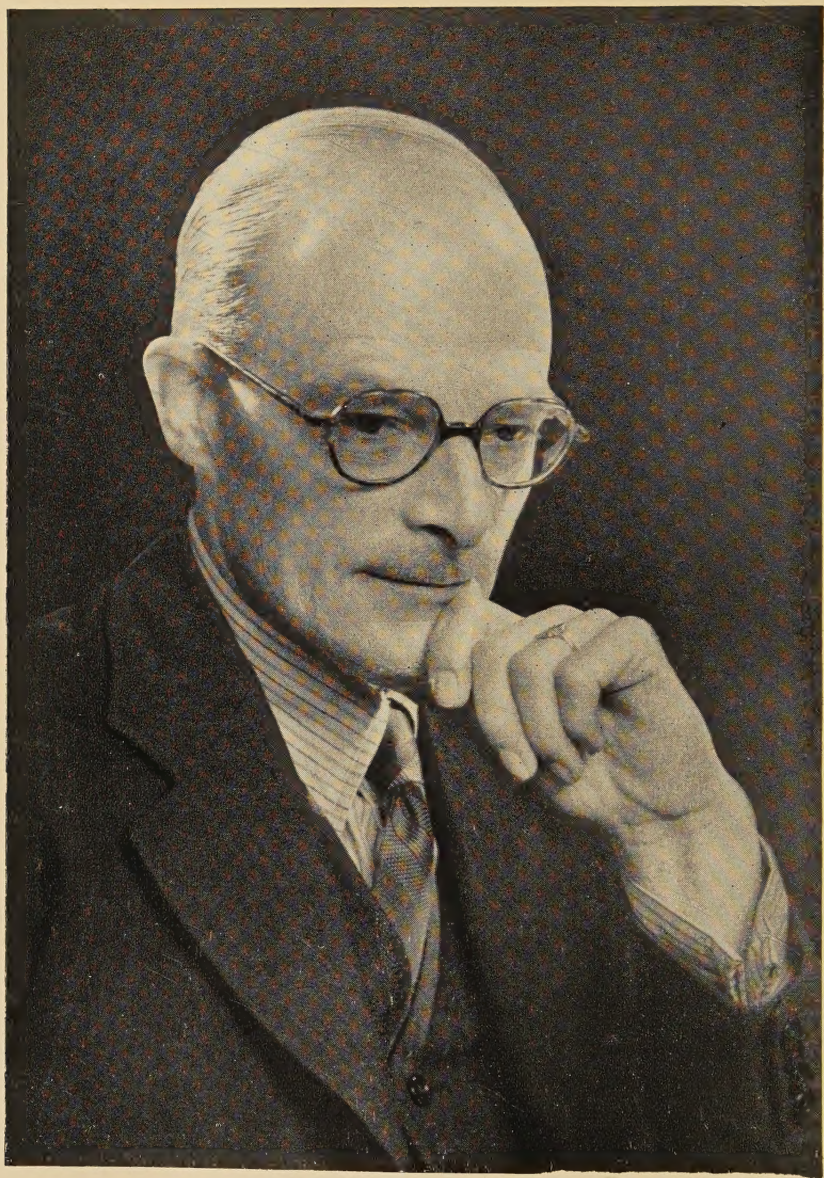
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THE AUTHOR

Richard Harrison, already known to the public as a writer of novels, has made an intensive study of crime and Police methods. His researches have not been confined to the metropolis, but he has been granted facilities for visiting Forces, Home Office Laboratories and prisons in many parts of the country. More recently he has extended his work to deal with the international aspects of crime and its prevention, and has been the guest of Police Headquarters on the Continent where he has also made the acquaintance of members of the International Criminal Investigation Office. His most recent visits have been to Holland where he is well known as an author, and to France.



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The Author

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THE STORY OF THE POLICE OF LONDON

Richard Harrison

With 22 Illustrations



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INTRODUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

WHEN I set out to write the Story of London's Police I quickly found that it was not a subject that could be completely covered in less than a whole library of books. Indeed, several hundred books have already been written, and the story is still far from complete. At the outset I discovered not five or six Police Forces in London, but over a dozen.

What I have endeavoured to do is to present a bird's-eye view of Police work in all its phases, and to present it in a form that will entertain as well as instruct. All cases mentioned are real, with the exception of that in the chapter on 'The Case for the Crown', and that can be fairly described as composite rather than fictitious. Murder receives quite undue prominence, as I am well aware. The average number of murders in England each year is round about a hundred, but murder arouses an interest that burglary or fraud can never do, and the public follows keenly every step taken by the Police to apprehend the perpetrators.

There are three classes to whom I hope this work, with all its imperfections and omissions, will appeal: the reader who takes a normal and healthy interest in the efforts of the Police to prevent crime and accident, and to bring to justice those who have offended against the Law; the student of crime in fact and fiction to whom fuller details of Police and legal procedure will bring ability to 'read between the lines' of what appears in the Press and in novels; and lastly (and most rashly) to those who would cater for the public taste in detective fiction in order that they may be saved from pitfalls and inaccuracies such as I have been fortunate to escape myself. Chiefly for them I have included a full index.

How often has one read in fiction that the detective 'carefully picked up the revolver in his handkerchief to avoid smudging finger-prints'? In fact, the detective would be guilty of no such ridiculous procedure: he would insert a pencil in the barrel of the weapon and lift it by means of the pencil into a special box. But I didn't know that until I was told!

Such a work could not have been completed without the help and co-operation of a very large number of people, and I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to the following:

The Commissioners of Police for the City of London and for the Metropolis who granted me special facilities to see things for myself, and to all the officers of their respective Forces from whom I received every help and courtesy; the Chiefs of Police of the Port of London Authority, the four Railway Companies, and the London Passenger Transport Board and their officers for time and information readily placed at my disposal; H.M. Prison Commissioners, the Governors of

Holloway, Wandsworth, and Bedford Prisons for inside information, obtained first hand; my old friend, Mr. Frank Powell, the Metropolitan Magistrate, for his valuable assistance in writing the case of the P.C. Gutteridge murder; Mr. Gerald Howard and Mr. F. H. Lawton for legal information in the cases of William Joyce, Hulten and Jones, and Dobkin; Messrs. John E. Horwell, O.B.E., R. Morrish, W. W. Selby, and 'Bob' Skelly, all former C.I.D. officers; Mr. A. G. Selby for information about the English private investigator; the *News of the World* for placing at my disposal their records extending over many years; Dr. G. B. Harrison, Mr. M. P. Charlesworth, and Mr. P. Hunter-Blair for historical notes; Mr. Ernest Dudley, Miss Nancy Spain, Mr. John Creasey, and Mr. John Slate for help in preparing the chapter on 'The Detective in Fact and Fiction'; and many others too numerous to mention individually. The few 'old lags' among my acquaintances will thank me far more for keeping their names out!

If I have failed to include any whom I should have mentioned, I offer them my apologies and assure them that the neglect is entirely inadvertent.

In conclusion, I have learnt a lot during the preparation of this work—more, in fact, than it is in the public interest to print—and what I learnt has strengthened my admiration for the Police of London. If I only succeed in giving the ratepayer an idea of the value he receives for a portion of his rates, I shall have accomplished something useful!

RICHARD HARRISON.

New Malden,

1947.

CHAPTER I

GHOSTS ON THE EMBANKMENT

IF ghosts, earthbound by their crimes, haunt London streets, then surely they must gather in their thousands along the strip of riverside that fronts the grim, solid pile of New Scotland Yard.

Murderers and thieves, pimps and petty pilferers, card-sharpers and confidence tricksters, gangsters, and racketeers—yes, England too has known these—coiners, forgers, and dope pedlars: all the hierarchy of criminals great and small go to make up that vast assembly.

Some have lived and sinned and died in obscurity: the only records of their lives repose in the files of Scotland Yard. Others have hit the headlines with brief notoriety and passed on to pay—at eight o'clock one morning—the supreme price for the supreme crime.

Some, like 'Flannelfoot', who pleaded guilty at last to over five hundred offences, have enjoyed a long spell of immunity; others have felt the grip of a strong hand after their first venture into crime.

There are few—very few—gaps in the ranks of the army of the convicted. Scotland Yard has a long arm and a long memory.

Some of the faces still stir public recollection: little Crippen, the wife-murderer, peering mildly through gold-rimmed lenses; Charles Peace, by day respectable music-lover, by night callous desperado; Eddie Manning, negro dope-king, immaculate and fascinating; George Joseph Smith, thrice a widower by his own hand; Vaquier, the dapper Frenchman, who slew a husband and failed to win a wife . . . their name is legion and their crimes break every law.



Scotland Yard, once a palace for Royalty, then a poor Thames-side district, then a Police office.

So firmly did its Police associations become fixed in the public mind that when increasing business demanded expansion and the Police Office was moved to new premises nearby, it took the name with it. New Scotland Yard it is officially. More familiarly just 'The Yard', a title by which it is known all over the world.

Three buildings on the corner of Whitehall and the Embankment. Massive, ugly buildings, two of them, linked together by a covered, curving bridge that to some may suggest the more sinister Bridge of Sighs.

Below, the two older buildings are of dark grey stone; above, lines of white run through the red bricks. At each corner a wind-vane, and another wind-vane just above street level at the south-east end where it shelters from the wind. The only useless piece of apparatus, one would imagine, that the Yard permits.

The third building is new and clean and functional. It radiates an efficiency that its older sisters conceal. This, too, is linked by a bridge and now houses departments which were crowded out of the centre of the Metropolis by the demands of war.

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A poor, drab place, Old Scotland Yard after the departure of the Kings and before the coming of the Police.

Writing of it as a young man, Charles Dickens says:

“Scotland Yard is a small—a very small—tract of land, bounded on one side by the river Thames, on the other by the gardens of Northumberland House: abutting at one end on the bottom of Northumberland Street, at the other on the back of Whitehall Place. When this territory was first accidentally discovered by a country gentleman who lost his way in the Strand, some years ago, the original settlers were found to be a tailor, a publican, two eating-house keepers, and a fruit-pie maker; and it was also found to contain a race of strong bulky men, who repaired to the wharfs in Scotland Yard regularly every morning, about five or six o’clock, to fill heavy wagons with coal, with which they proceeded to distant places up the country, and supplied the inhabitants with fuel. When they had emptied their wagons, they again returned for a fresh supply; and this trade was continued throughout the year. . . .

“But the choicest spot in all Scotland Yard was the old public-house on the corner. Here, in a dark wainscoted room of ancient appearance, cheered by the glow of a mighty fire, and decorated with an enormous clock, whereof the face was white, and the figures black, sat the lusty coal-heavers, quaffing large draughts of Barclay’s best, and puffing forth volumes of smoke, which wreathed heavily above their heads, and involved the room in a thick dark cloud. From this apartment might their voices be heard on a winter’s night, penetrating to the very bank of the river, as they shouted out some sturdy chorus, or roared forth the burden of a popular song; dwelling upon the last few words with a strength and length of emphasis which made the very roof tremble above them.

“Here, too, would they tell old legends of what the Thames was in ancient times, when the Patent Shot Manufactory wasn’t built, and Waterloo Bridge had never been thought of; and then they would shake their heads with portentous looks, to the deep edification of

the rising generation of heavens, who crowded round them, and wondered where all this would end; whereat the tailor would take his pipe solemnly from his mouth, and say, how that he hoped it might end well, but he very much doubted whether it would or not, and couldn't rightly tell what to make of it. . . .

"About this time the barges that came up the river began to bring vague rumours to Scotland Yard of somebody in the city having been heard to say that the Lord Mayor had threatened in so many words to pull down the old London Bridge, and build up a new one. At first these rumours were disregarded as idle tales, wholly destitute of foundation, for nobody in Scotland Yard doubted that if the Lord Mayor contemplated any such dark design, he would just be clapped up in the Tower for a week or so, and then killed off for high treason.

"By degrees, however, the reports grew stronger, and more frequent, and at last a barge, laden with numerous chaldrons of the best Wallsend, brought up the positive intelligence that several of the arches of the old bridge were stopped, and that preparations were actually in progress for constructing the new one. What an excitement was visible in the old tap-room on that memorable night! Each man looked into his neighbour's face, pale with alarm and astonishment, and read therein an echo of the sentiments which filled his own breast. The oldest heaver present proved to demonstration that the moment the piers were removed, all the water in the Thames would run clean off, and leave a dry gully in its place. What was to become of the coal-barges—of the trade of Scotland Yard—of the very existence of its population? The tailor shook his head more sagely than usual, and grimly pointing to a knife on the table, bid them wait and see what happened. He said nothing—not he; but if the Lord Mayor didn't fall a victim to a popular indignation, why he would be rather astonished; that was all.

"They did wait; barge after barge arrived, and still no tidings of the assassination of the Lord Mayor. The first stone was laid: it was done by a Duke—the King's brother. Years passed away, and the bridge was opened by the King himself. In course of time the piers were removed; and when the people in Scotland Yard got up next morning in the confident expectation of being able to step over to Pedlar's Acre without wetting the soles of their shoes, they found to their unspeakable astonishment that the water was just where it used to be.

"A result so different from that which they had anticipated from this first improvement, produced its full effect upon the inhabitants of Scotland Yard. One of the eating-house keepers began to court public opinion, and to look for customers among a new class of people. He covered his little dining-tables with white cloths, and got a painter's apprentice to inscribe something about hot joints from twelve to two,

in one of the little panes of his shop-window. Improvement began to march with rapid strides to the very threshold of Scotland Yard. A new market sprung up at Hungerford, and the Police Commissioners established their office in Whitehall Place. The traffic in Scotland Yard increased; fresh Members were added to the House of Commons, the Metropolitan Representatives found it a near cut, and many other foot passengers followed their example.

"We marked the advance of civilization, and beheld it with a sigh. . . ."¹

So, too, if they could have foreseen the future, would the thieves and burglars and pickpockets who infested the streets of old London Town have beheld the march of civilization with a sigh. The little group of three inspectors and nine sergeants—which later became the first detective force—was to lay the foundations of a department that could meet the children of Fagin on equal terms and drive them from the streets, ferret them from their holes and hovels and send them to the prisons and the gallows.

The first of the three great buildings that now house the offices of the Metropolitan Police was erected in 1890, the second in 1905, and the third in 1940.

From a distance there is nothing to connect them with the Police and with the prevention and detection of crime. It is only when one crosses the road that one can appreciate the nature of the activity never absent from the sombre yard between the two older buildings—a yard which leads from the Embankment to Whitehall. Here by day and night the traffic cars and prison vans come and go, police officers in uniform and plain clothes pass in or out to duty. Here, too, unheard by all save those for whom they are intended, pass thousands of messages by wire and wireless, telephone and teleprinter.

Two errors are frequently made in regard to the organization and duties of New Scotland Yard.

First, it is not exclusively devoted to the detection of crime, though this is an important and—to the general public—spectacular part of its work.

Second, it is concerned *only* with the control of the Metropolitan Police Force and with special State duties, though the services of certain departments are available to other Forces on request. The Yard does not send detective officers to solve crimes outside the Metropolitan area unless the Police Force concerned asks for help.

Although Scotland Yard exists solely for the service of the public, it is not one of London's public buildings, and apart from those whose duty takes them into its many departments very few penetrate beyond the spacious hall which is approached by steep steps and swing doors. Behind them an officer is always on duty, and only those whose business is the concern of the Yard pass him.

¹ From *Sketches by Boz*.

Many try. There are those who believe that the loss of a handbag or wallet is of direct personal interest to the Commissioner. So, in a way, it is, but minor matters of this kind are relegated to the nearest police-station where there are always constables and detectives to deal with them. Contrary to the belief of many people, the whole of the C.I.D. is not concentrated inside the Yard. Out of an establishment of approximately one thousand four hundred, some seven hundred and fifty detectives are attached to the various police-stations throughout the area.

During the war, as can well be imagined, enemy raids kept the Metropolitan Police occupied.

The coming of peace brought little relief to Scotland Yard. The reintroduction of the basic petrol ration encouraged drivers by their thousands on to the roads with a consequent sharp rise in the number of accidents and thefts of, and from, vehicles. At the same time there was a big increase in crime generally—nearly 25 per cent over 1944. The total number of indictable offences for 1945 was 128,954—the highest, says the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis in his Report¹—since the new system of recording was introduced in 1932.

The causes, he considers, are unsettlement due to long continued war conditions, scarcity of many articles ordinarily obtainable, the return of large numbers of people to London, and the presence of troops, many on demobilization or on their way home overseas.

Deserters without means of obtaining food and clothing by legitimate means created a special problem, as did houses and shops made accessible to thieves by raid damage.

All these the Yard had to tackle with strength depleted by war service.

The crime curve is now steadily decreasing as more men return to Police duties, as the Yard perfects its methods of prevention and detection, and as the public learns to co-operate.

That the Metropolitan Police Force has been able to recruit men of the right type to its ranks—young men of courage, quick to think and quick to turn thought into action—is shown by its war record. Very many of those who went on active service were attracted to the Royal Air Force, and between them they won 86 Distinguished Flying Crosses. Other awards include 2 O.B.E.s (Military), 4 D.S.O.s, 8 M.B.E.s (Military), 7 D.S.C.s, 5 M.C.s, and 1 D.C.M., while 61 were mentioned in dispatches. In all, 194 members were decorated for war service with the Forces.

Those officers compelled to remain at home were neither unworthy nor neglected. The Order of Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath went to the retiring Commissioner, Sir Philip Game, and three high-ranking officials received the O.B.E. During the period of the war,

¹ Report of the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis for the year 1945.

35 officers were awarded the King's Police and Fire Services Medal for gallantry, and a further 29 for distinguished service; 150 officers were decorated, and 114 officers were recommended by the King for their work in connection with war activities.

Truly a Force for London to be proud of, and one to which the public can look with confidence to protect life and property.

The ghosts on the Embankment are not all those of wrong-doers. With them mingle, perhaps, the men who devoted their lives to fighting for peace, order, and security within the realm.

And not all ghosts, these guardians of the Law.

Some, indeed, have passed on; their memorial—a cleaner, safer London. Others, in well-earned retirement, wander at their ease along the water-front to revisit the scene of their labours and triumphs. Yet others, with a brisker step, still pass through the doors of the Yard to duty, for the fight goes on.

Detective Wensley (later Chief Constable) who once posed as a City merchant and made a deal for Siberian gold dust, 'mined' by 'con' men from brass stair-rods.

John Horwell, 'Horwell of the Yard' (later Chief Constable) terror of tricksters; Divisional Detective-Inspector Walter Burmby. . . .

To an older generation belong James Munro, who rose to be head of the C.I.D. and then to be Commissioner; Chief Inspector Dennis, who went from the Yard to be Commissioner of Police in New Zealand; Chief Superintendent Williamson, who later became a Chief Constable; Chief Inspector Froest. . . .

These, and many others, were the men who laid the foundations of the Yard's Criminal Investigation Department as it is to-day.

Science has put new weapons into the hands of Police and criminals alike, but the fundamental issue is between man and man.

Sometimes a police officer will say: "Detection these days—it's a matter of routine and records." That is no more than a modest half-truth. Routine without reasoning is futile; records are for those who can understand as well as read.

When the Metropolitan Police Force was first organized in 1829 it was issued with these instructions:

"The primary object of an efficient Police is the prevention of

crime: the next, that of detection and punishment of offenders if crime is committed.

“To these ends all the efforts of Police must be directed. The protection of life and property, the preservation of public tranquillity, and the absence of crime, will alone prove whether those efforts have been successful, and whether the objects for which the Police were appointed have been attained.”

To-day those instructions still stand.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORY OF THE POLICE

WHILE the laws of England owe much to the laws of the Romans, the English Police system is a sturdy native growth, unique to the country of its origin.

In ancient times any body of men that sought to maintain security by force of persuasion rather than by force of arms would have been beyond imagination, and most countries to-day still hold that belief. It is no uncommon thing to find in a foreign police-station a veritable arsenal of lethal weapons, tear-gas, and even light armoured vehicles as part of the standard equipment.

In strange contrast is the English police-station with its small reserve of light automatic pistols jealously guarded and issued only for cases of extreme danger, such as the arrest of a desperate criminal known to be armed.

Rome itself maintained a body of armed guards in classical times. They were known as the Vigiles, and resembled the modern English police only to the extent that they were employed by the city. (In England to-day the Police Forces, with the exception of the Metropolitan Police and certain other organizations such as the Port of London Authority and Railway Police, are controlled by the Watch Committees of the boroughs and the Standing Joint Committees of the counties.)

In towns and cities of the more peaceful parts of the Roman Empire, the market officials—important officers with no exact modern counterpart—maintained bodies of slaves or public servants to keep the peace, though some towns with a flourishing commerce occasionally asked for a centurion and a company of soldiers for greater security. In less settled provinces all police duties were carried out by the military or by veterans and time-expired soldiers who were planted in ‘Colonies’ at important points to maintain order.

The Roman legions departed and with them the Roman traditions of law and order, leaving every man to fend for himself and to protect his goods with his own arms.

The period that followed was not conducive to the preparation and preservation of reliable records, but it is evident that steps were taken locally for security by common consent and action.

The first reliable record that exists is a document entitled, *Judicia Civitatis Landoniæ*, which belongs to the reign of Æthelstan (circa 924–939). This document describes a complex system of which details have been lost, but which operated in the main as a ‘peace guild’. Members of the guild were grouped together in tens and appointed a head man. The tens

were further grouped into hundreds, which likewise appointed a head man who acted as chairman with the ten head men of the tens as his committee. The committee seems to have functioned as a combination of police force, mutual protection society, and insurance company. It met once a month, 'whether it be when the butts are being filled or any other occasion that may be convenient for us'. Since the records show that the committee dined together, one may assume that the 'filling of the butts' was a very convenient occasion, and that they were also emptied!

The committee administered the funds of the guild, which were derived from an annual subscription of four pence a head. In those days the purchasing power of a penny was considerable, and the price of a sheep was four pence. Members who were not in arrears were entitled to compensation for stolen property from the funds, and disbursement was chiefly for the theft of cattle. Notice of loss had to be given within three days, 'for', says the record, 'we believe that many men do not care where their cattle wander, owing to their excessive confidence in the public security . . . we will not pay for any stray cattle unless it has been stolen, since many men bring impudent claims for compensation'.

The real purpose of the guild was evidently the suppression of theft, and as such it undertook the functions of a Police Force. No information is available about the steps taken for achieving public security before the great Danish invasions of the ninth century, except, perhaps, in the case of manslaughter. From the earliest times the families of both sides were automatically involved in blood feuds, but the influence of Christianity had, by the seventh century, modified this savage and inconclusive practice to a system of compensatory fines. Early Kentish laws put a price on everything from manslaughter to the nail on a man's little finger.

The London guild is the only one of its kind of which we have any detailed record, but in other parts of the country the ancient territorial Hundred performed somewhat similar functions. Traces of this institution survive in the still existing 'Hundreds' (e.g. Chiltern Hundreds). In Danish areas this institution was known as *wapentake*, but the difference was one of language and race rather than of organization.

Wapentakes still survive to the present day in Lincolnshire, and the origin of the word is interesting. It is derived from the Anglo-Saxon *wapentac*, which in turn is borrowed from the Old Norse *vapnatak*, literally 'the taking up of weapons'. Not, as one might imagine, in pursuit of a felon, but signifying agreement with a resolution at a public meeting, just as to-day assent is given by show of hands. The word came to stand for the meeting itself, then for the area which the meeting represented.

One document from the third quarter of the tenth century gives rather more detail of constitution and operation. The Hundred, it says, was to hold a meeting once every four weeks. Apart from the settling of disputes (a sort of combined Police and County Court), its

main concern was still the suppression of theft. The obligation of pursuing thieves lay on the individuals living within each Hundred, and they were liable to be fined for failure in that duty. There are certain archaic features about the organization which suggest that the system may have operated in much earlier times than existing records establish.

The reader may notice some similarity in the system to the much more recent methods of rough-and-ready justice in those parts of the United States where conditions in newly-settled areas demanded prompt, stern measures if order was to be maintained.

The Normans, when they conquered England, were content in the main to let the existing system alone, and changes were mostly changes only of terminology.

During the early Middle Ages the all-powerful barons held their own courts and administered justice to those who committed offences within their domains—sometimes impartially, sometimes to suit their own ends.

When the power of the barons was broken, the enforcement of justice reverted partly to its earlier form, though instead of the 'Police' being voluntary or elected members of the community, the villages and parishes appointed paid Constables whose duty it was to arrest those against whom a warrant had been issued or who had been caught *flagrante delicto*.

In London and the counties the Sheriff had his *posse comitatus*, usually formed from his own servants, which could be summoned when riot or disturbance threatened.

'Hue and Cry' was the usual method of dealing with offenders, and was survival of Saxon (and possibly earlier) times. The cry of 'Stop Thief' was raised and every available man in the village or parish turned out to take part in the chase. When the offender crossed the boundary into another parish, it was the duty of the males of that parish to take up pursuit. The system worked quite effectively, since the 'hare' was constantly being chased by fresh 'hounds'.

There was no organized system of crime detection, and the magistrate was responsible for taking the initiative.

In towns a system of 'watch and ward' called upon able-bodied citizens to take turns in patrolling the streets at night.

Shakespeare, who as a young man possibly incurred the displeasure of both Constable and Watch, described these officials with some malice.

In *Much Ado About Nothing* we have Dogberry, a City Officer, charging the Watch.

.

DOGBERRY: . . . *You are thought here to be the most senseless and fit man for the constable of the watch; therefore bear you the lantern. This is your charge:*

you shall comprehend all vagrom men; you are to bid any man stand in the Prince's name.

SECOND WATCH: *How if a man will not stand?*

DOGBERRY: *Why, then take no note of him but let him go; and presently call all the rest of the watch together, and thank God you are rid of a knave.*

VERGES (another City officer): *If he will not stand when he is bidden, he is none of the Prince's subjects.*

DOGBERRY: *True, and they are to meddle with none but the Prince's subjects.—You shall also make no noise in the streets; for, for the watch to babble and talk is most tolerable and not to be endured.*

SECOND WATCH: *We will rather sleep than talk; we know what belongs to a watch.*

DOGBERRY: *Why, you speak like an ancient and most quiet watchman; for I cannot see how sleeping should offend: only have a care that your bills be not stolen.—Well, you are to call at all the ale-houses, and bid them that are drunk get them to bed.*

SECOND WATCH: *How if they will not?*

DOGBERRY: *Why, then let them alone till they are sober; if they make you not then the better answer, you may say they are not the men you took them for.*

SECOND WATCH: *Well, sir.*

DOGBERRY: *If you meet a thief, you may suspect him, by virtue of your office, to be no true man; and, for such kind of men, the less you meddle or make with them, why, the more is for your honesty.*

SECOND WATCH: *If we know him to be a thief, shall we not lay hands on him?*

DOGBERRY: *Truly, by your office, you may; but I think they that touch pitch will be defiled: the most peaceable way for you, if you do take a thief, is to let him show himself what he is, and steal out of your company.*

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While there may have been personal prejudice on the part of the playwright, there is reason to suppose that Dogberry and his Watch was a caricature at least drawn from life.

Elbow, the constable in *Measure for Measure*, is a clown who tries to ape the conversation of his betters and succeeds only in misplacing his words.

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ELBOW: *If it please your honour, I am the poor Duke's constable, and my name is Elbow; I do lean upon justice, sir, and do bring here before your honour two notorious benefactors. . . . My wife, sir, whom I detest before Heaven and your honour,—*

ESCALUS: *How ! Thy wife?*

ELBOW: *Ay, sir, whom, I thank Heaven, is an honest woman,——*

ESCALUS: *Dost thou detest her therefore?*

* * *

CLOWN: *Sir, if it please your honour, this is not so.*

ELBOW: *Prove it before these varlets here, thou honourable man, prove it.*

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There is nothing subtle about Elbow. Shakespeare, perhaps mindful of some village constable who charged him with an offence against the laws of game and refused to appreciate his nimble wit, has parodied the whole office by making Elbow a stubborn, self-opinionated oaf.

By the eighteenth century the population of London had grown, and the criminal section of the community had increased out of all proportion. In the middle of the century Sir Henry Fielding, the novelist, was appointed a magistrate at Bow Street, where he formed the famous Bow Street Police. His work was carried on, after his death in 1754, by his blind half-brother, Sir John Fielding, also a Bow Street magistrate.

The Bow Street Police were divided into three sections, the Foot Patrol, the Mounted Patrol, and the Runners. At their greatest strength the Patrols totalled 300, and they patrolled the main roads to a distance of fifteen miles from Charing Cross to protect travellers against highwaymen and footpads.

The Runners, a mere dozen men, were, in effect, the first detective force. They were available for the arrest of criminals only to such as could afford the heavy fees they charged, and they were not always above suspicion, being often enough, it is said, open to be bought off by the man they pursued. Charles Dickens's opinion of them will be found elsewhere in this work.

But they did occasionally show good results.

In October of 1823 two articles were found on the bank of a river near Aldenham in the county of Hertfordshire. One was a penknife and the other a pistol. On the butt of the pistol were blood and hair, and on the barrel were fragments of human brain. No body was at first discovered, but the Watford magistrates, having good reason to suspect murder, sent for the Bow Street Runners. Two officers, Upson and Ruthven, were sent to investigate, and the trail led them to a near-by cottage. Here they found a sack and a blood-stained shirt marked with the initials W. W.

On 8th October they arrested the owner of the cottage, William Probert, and a man named Thomas Thurtell. Probert broke down under cross-examination and John Thurtell, brother of Thomas, and Joseph Hunt were incriminated by his statement.

One of the Runners returned to London and arrested John Thurtell at his lodgings. Search there revealed blood-stained handkerchief and clothes.

Still no body had been found; but Hunt, although so far there was only the evidence of Probert against him, volunteered to show the Runners where the corpse was to be found.

As a result of his information a pond was dragged and the body of a man was recovered. The feet were tied and a shawl had been wrapped round the head which was battered beyond recognition. He was identified as William Weare, gaming-house proprietor and card-sharper.

The case did not come for trial until January in the following year, by which time the investigations of Upson and Ruthven had produced damning evidence against John Thurtell and Hunt.

Both men were of good family, but they had consorted with gamblers and spendthrifts and finally associated themselves with Weare in the systematic robbery of those who had more money than sense.

It was Weare's habit to carry his ill-gotten gains on his person, and these Thurtell determined to secure for himself. Weare was lured from London and driven in a gig by Thurtell, with Probert and Hunt following in another gig.

Thurtell alone was responsible for the killing. He drew a pistol and fired at Weare but succeeded only in wounding him in the jaw. Weare jumped down and ran for his life, but Thurtell followed, battering his head with the pistol as he ran. Weare fell at last and his assailant cut his throat with a penknife and shot him through the head with his second pistol.

Hunt and Probert were rewarded for their share in the plot with £6 each.

The evidence of Probert was necessary to the prosecution, and as King's Evidence he stood in no danger of penalty. Thurtell and Hunt were both found guilty and condemned to death. Thurtell was duly hanged, but Hunt's sentence was commuted to transportation for life.

But the Bow Street Runners and Patrols could not cope with the vast increase in crime. Parliament was disturbed by the lawlessness of London's streets, and in 1829 the then Home Secretary, Sir Robert Peel, introduced his famous measure, the Metropolis Police Improvement Bill. In May of that year it received Royal Assent.

The new Act was not without opponents, even among the law-abiding who saw in it a threat to Liberty, and public opinion was expressed by such nicknames for the new Force as 'Blue Devils', and 'Raw Lobsters', later modified to the more appreciative titles of 'Peelers' and 'Bobbies' after their founder.

The Bow Street Foot Patrol was immediately absorbed in the new Metropolitan Police, and seven years later the Horse Patrol was also incorporated to become the Mounted Branch.

The Runners survived until 1839.

In 1830 the strength of the Force was 3,000; but ten years later its

potential value had been recognized and it was increased to 18,000, and administered the area enclosed by a circle with a radius of fifteen miles from Charing Cross.

The Bow Street men had been distinguished by red waistcoats, which earned them the title of 'Red-breasts'; but Peel equipped his Force with full uniform of blue swallow-tail coats, blue trousers—which were changed to white in summer—leather top-hats, and thick leather stocks which could defy the grip of stranglers. Umbrellas were prohibited to men on duty in 1859, and in 1863 the uniform was changed to one similar to that worn to-day. Beards were permitted in 1869, and though they have long since gone out of fashion, the Force has—at the time of writing—one bearded constable.

In 1842 the detective force was founded with a strength of eight men. A note on this early force by Charles Dickens appears in another chapter.

A scandal which temporarily discredited the detectives occurred in 1877, and arose from a series of frauds practised on a French widow, Madame de Goncourt, living in Paris. With the aid of a sporting paper printed specially for the occasion, the lady was induced first to act as agent for a gang of swindlers by betting with their money in her own name, then to invest her own money on 'certain winners'. She parted with £10,000, and was only prevented from 'investing' a further £30,000 by lack of ready money. She consulted her banker, who was instantly suspicious and caused inquiries to be made in London.

Madame de Goncourt was fortunate in recovering the bulk of her £10,000, but it transpired at the trial of the gang that they had been following a career of crime for years and that thousands of pounds had passed fraudulently through their hands.

Why had the Police taken no action?

The question was answered by members of the gang who, perhaps hoping for some mitigation of the sentence, decided to give evidence that would bring home a charge of conspiracy to the chief officers of the Metropolitan Detective Force.

Chief Inspectors Druscovich, Palmer, and Clarke, Inspector Meiklejohn, and a solicitor named Froggart were charged before the magistrate at Bow Street and sent for trial at the Old Bailey.

The charge was that the accused men had entered into conspiracy with the swindlers to aid them in their proceedings, to prevent their being arrested, and generally to pervert the course of justice.

Meiklejohn, it was stated, was the first officer to be seduced from his duty. He received £100 for warning the gang when warrants had been issued for their arrest, so that they could change their names and addresses and start business elsewhere.

The trial lasted for a month, and at the end all the defendants except Clarke were found guilty.

Commenting on it, Mr. Montague Williams, Q.C., a famous barrister who defended Meiklejohn, wrote thirteen years later:

"I have always considered that this trial was the breaking-up of the Metropolitan detective force. The men who were convicted had been, before they were led away from their duty, leading and important officers; and, so far as I know, from that day to this the force has never been properly and systematically reorganized."¹

His comments were unfair—not deliberately, for he was the fairest of men. The force was reorganized, and a section of it, the Special Branch, had accomplished some extremely useful work before the close of the century. For obvious reasons the detective force avoided publicity even more than usual and grew to the fine and efficient body of men that to-day makes it abundantly clear crime does not pay in England.

Whatever the faults of the detective force at that time, the courage and resourcefulness of the rank and file was exemplified when a police constable stationed at Blackheath succeeded, in spite of serious wounds, in handcuffing an armed burglar single-handed.

The burglar was one of the most notorious English criminals of all times—Charles Peace.

The constable, P.C. Robinson, noticed that a house appeared to have been illegally entered, and went to investigate. Inside he found a burglar who promptly fired five times at him with a revolver. Although hit, Robinson closed with his assailant. The man drew a sheath-knife, but was overpowered and handcuffed. He was later identified as 'Mr. Johnson', a highly respected resident of Peckham with a great reputation as a music lover and a churchwarden. He was tried for burglary and for the assault on P.C. Robinson and sent to penal servitude for life. The Police continued to investigate the antecedents of the 'respectable Mr. Johnson' after the trial, and as a result he was removed to Leeds, tried there on a charge of murder in that city, condemned and hanged. Before execution he confessed to one other murder, but he was probably responsible for several more. Peace had always worked alone, and for many years he made burglary a highly successful profession.

There has been one other event in the history of London's Police, and it is possibly connected with the case of the detectives.

For many years the Police were undoubtedly underpaid, yet they were required to maintain the highest standards of integrity. The matter of pensions had been more fairly dealt with in the Police Act of 1890, but increased cost of living in the 1914-1918 war acerbated the condition of serving Police officers. An underground union, the National Union of Police and Prison Officers, came into existence, and though membership of this was forbidden it continued to recruit members.

¹ Montague Williams: *Leaves of a Life*.

In August of 1918 the Union made three demands to the authorities: An immediate increase of pay and bonus, the immediate re-instatement without penalties of a dismissed constable, and complete official recognition of the Union. No reply was made to the demands, and on 30th August the London Police went on strike. The Prime Minister personally intervened and practically all the demands of the Union were met.

The Union considered that it had won a notable victory and pressed, in a provocative manner, for further concessions. In March of 1919 a Committee sat, with Lord Desborough as its chairman, to consider the whole question of Police service. The first part of its report was lavish in its suggestions for better conditions and was eminently satisfactory to most of the men. The Union, however, appeared to find that better conditions undermined its authority which rested on grievances. Another strike was called in August of 1919. A very small proportion of London's Police responded: in the City only 6 per cent were absent from duty. The Union was broken, and in its place a 'Police Federation'—with every Police Officer in the country as a member—was authorized by the Police Act of 1919.

CHAPTER III

THE OLDEST FORCE

THE City of London occupies one square mile, and from the year 1285 its police have their own unique history. The Statute of Winchester passed in that year, when Edward I was on the throne, did not apply to the City, which was honoured with a separate statute of its own.

Apparently, from the preamble to the statute, it was very necessary, for it says:

First, whereas many evils, as Murders, Robberies and Manslaughters, have been committed heretofore in the City by Night and by Day, and People have been beaten and evil entreated, and divers other Mischances have befallen against his (the King's) peace . . .

From that date at least the City of London appears to have maintained something vaguely resembling a police force which, under the direction of the Court of Mayor and Aldermen, was responsible for seeing that 'Watch and Ward' was properly carried out.

Elections were held in each Ward for the appointment of Constables who were required to be Freemen, and among their duties was that of keeping up-to-date the register of residents. They were also responsible for seeing that every adult male resident took his part on 'Ward and Watch'. The Watch was set every night, much in the same way as 'Fire Watching' was carried out throughout England during the war. In times of emergency the Watch was doubled and served by day as well as by night, half the strength being held in reserve.

This system gradually fell into decay. There was no Act of Parliament to enforce it, and crime once again became rampant in the City. In 1663, in the reign of Charles II, the Court of Common Council of the City passed an Act that provided for a thousand Watchmen or Bellmen to be on duty from sunset to sunrise. These Watchmen acquired the nickname of 'Charleys'.

By the eighteenth century the 'Charleys' had ceased to cope adequately with crime and disorder in the City and an Act of Parliament was passed 'for better regulating the Night Watch and Bedels within the City of London and the liberties thereof'. For the first time a Force was established on something approaching modern lines. Two City Marshals who acted as High Constables were appointed, and, while

'Watch and Ward' continued, a Force of paid Constables was established.

The term 'Constable' originally stood for a very exalted rank, but as less pleasant duties were imposed on holders of the office, so men of lesser status and dignity came to accept it. At one time it was the usual practice for the elected Constable to hire a substitute to carry out his duties. It is held by some authorities that Robert Fitzwalter, Constable of the City, headed the delegation of barons to King John with the petition that resulted in the signing of the Magna Carta.

The Act of 1737 governed the Police Force of the City for over a century, and there is still extant a copy of "Rules, Orders and Regulations for the Police of the City of London, agreed to and ordered by the Court of Aldermen, the 30th day of March, 1824".

This document lays down the duties of Marshals and Constables and directs that

"The Day Patrol do wear the following dress:—Blue coat, drab waistcoat with the City button, blue trousers . . . that the pay of the Day-Patrol be Five Shillings and Threepence per day, and the Night-Patrol Four Shillings per Night; and that they be not allowed any sum whatever for attending Executions, Whippings, or on other occasions heretofore termed extra duties, except the Sunday duty. . . ."

When Sir Robert Peel, the then Home Secretary, established the Metropolitan Police in 1829, he took many features of the City Police as a basis for his new Force. What he failed to do was to amalgamate the two Forces, for the City resisted strenuously and successfully. At the same time the Aldermen of the City realized that the maintenance of a territorially small island site in the middle of the Metropolitan Police area would require a Police Force of the highest efficiency if it were to retain its independence, and drastic steps were taken during the next ten years to bring the City Police to a point of perfection. At first the newly-appointed Force of three inspectors, ten sergeants and eighty-five constables functioned only in the daytime, but six years later the Force took over the duties of the Ward Constables and Watchmen. It was divided into six districts and the establishment was increased to 501.

The fears of the City were not without good foundation, and in 1839 Home Secretary Lord John Russell introduced a Bill which proposed that the City should become part of the Metropolitan Police district. The Court of Common Council immediately petitioned Queen Victoria with complete success. As a result a New Act of Parliament reconstituted and regulated the City Police, preserving all its ancient rights and privileges.

Two more attempts were made to amalgamate the Forces. The second, in 1863, evoked a protest so strong—from a meeting of 3,000 merchants and bankers in the Guildhall—that the Bill was withdrawn.

The City Force to-day has an authorized establishment of 975. At the head is a Commissioner (at present Lieut.-Col. Sir Hugh Turnbull, K.C.V.O., K.B.E.), and under him an Assistant Commissioner and a Surgeon.

There are three Divisions, each with a Divisional Station—Snow Hill, 'B', with a section house accommodating 31 single men; Bishopsgate, 'C', with a section house for 70 single men and flats for 35 married men, a police hospital with dental surgery, garage and ambulance station, and rifle range; Cloak Lane, 'D', which also houses the Headquarters of the Special Constabulary. There are also flats for 150 married men at Brixton, where the sports ground is situated.

Modern buildings of the Force compare favourably with those of any in the world. At Bishopsgate, for example, there is a section house fully equipped with recreational as well as service facilities, the former including an up-to-date rifle range. Meals are supplied by a 'self-cook' canteen, the men themselves having shown a preference for this over the cafeteria system.

The Surgeon holds an important position in the City Force, which possesses its own hospital of three wards and a dental surgery.

In addition to the regular Force there is a Police Reserve of pensioned Officers who are enrolled as circumstances demand, and a Special Constabulary with a strength of 266. Six companies of 'Specials' are attached to each Division, some of them being 'closed', that is, all the personnel belong to one bank or large firm.

Policing the City provides certain problems not encountered elsewhere. The resident population in 1945 was only 4,270 (it is probably higher now) and the day population 400,000. Shops, offices, and warehouses tempt thieves with rich hauls. Fire, in a rich and congested area (its rateable value in April, 1947, was £6,273,911), is an ever-present risk. In the City of London, and it is believed in no other city in the world, the Coroner holds inquest on fires. He also holds inquest on treasure trove, but in the City this is claimed by the Corporation of London instead of by the Crown.

The City Police administers its own ambulance service from stations at Bishopsgate and Smithfield, which are closely linked with the call-box system. A central switchboard at Headquarters in Old Jewry gives ready communication with 61 street call-boxes and kiosks.

Communications are maintained by wireless car, motor-cycle patrol, and mounted patrol. The teleprinter service extends to each police-station and to New Scotland Yard with whom the Force co-operates closely, making use also of the Criminal Record Office and many other services.

Training is now carried out for recruits at the Home Office Police School at Cannock, Staffordshire, while members of the C.I.D. attend the Yard's School for Detectives at Hendon.

Many of the City Detectives are specialist Officers, since they have to deal with frauds of a type requiring detailed knowledge of finance and company law. New legislation has protected the public to a large extent from fraudulent company promoters and other financial swindlers, but the 'rogues' gallery' at Old Jewry contains the photographs of many men—and a few women—who have figured in notable cases in the past. Their exposure has often entailed long and patient investigation.

Share-pushing ('bucket shops') was a pernicious system of defrauding members of the investing public for many years prior to the 1939-45 war, but the coming into operation of the Prevention of Fraud (Investments) Act 1939 prohibited all persons, other than members of a recognized Stock Exchange, from carrying on business as dealers in securities except under licence issued by the Board of Trade.

As the principal Stock Exchange in the British Isles is situated within the City of London, this type of fraud was particularly prevalent in the City, undoubtedly on account of the fact that an address in close proximity to the Stock Exchange favourably impressed members of the investing public and created a false sense of security in dealing with these fraudulent operators.

These 'bucket shops' usually began operations either by circularizing clients with pamphlets or letters or by sending copies of a weekly financial newspaper bearing an impressive title. To bait the trap much of the information was genuine.

In due course clients were recommended to purchase, through the 'bucket shop', a well-quoted and popular share, payment of which could be made either in cash or by realizing other securities.

Clients were later persistently telephoned or personally visited by share salesmen and advised to sell their recent purchases, together with other quoted securities they were known to hold, and invest the proceeds, if possible with other capital, in worthless shares of some other company held in the name of the share-pusher or his nominee.

Delivery of share certificates followed in due course, but the victims ultimately realized that the shares had no market value and that their money was lost.

It is known that in many instances specially trained American high-pressure salesmen—who came to this country ostensibly on holiday—were employed by these concerns either to telephone or call upon clients, and their persistence and persuasive eloquence undoubtedly resulted in many shrewd investors being taken off their guard and added to the list of victims.

By the time sufficient evidence had been obtained on which the police could take action, the only persons who could be brought to justice were underlings, the principals having returned to their native land.

The following three cases illustrate fraudulent means by which members of the public have been induced to part with their money. The first deals with the methods of the share-pushers—which include carefully-laid plans, financial juggling over a period of years, and the exercise of considerable ingenuity to avoid suspicion.

In May of 1933 the firm of X, Y & Co. commenced business as Investment Brokers from a good City address. Three years later even more expensive offices were rented, and the concern had every outward appearance of honest prosperity. Less than a year later the goodwill of the business was sold to another firm.

When X, Y & Co. began operations, business investors were extensively circularized and invited to participate in a pool scheme for trading in West Africa. There was a guaranteed return of capital with profits, and the public response was very gratifying—to the promoters. Investors were then invited to transfer their holdings to a syndicate which again guaranteed repayment of capital, this time with 'a bonus of £50 for every £250 invested, and a further interest of £400 free of cost and without liability'. The 'fortunate' investors were now informed that X, Y & Co. had obtained valuable concessions, that a new syndicate had been formed, and that they were about to receive their capital and profits—unless, of course, they preferred to invest the money in the second syndicate. Many did, only to learn that X, Y & Co. had sold out to another company.

Suspensions were aroused at last and complaints reached the City Police. A long and patient investigation followed, during which statements were taken from hundreds of people.

At last warrants were issued for the arrest of the three principals, and the help of the Special Branch at Scotland Yard was invited to trace one of the men who was believed to be abroad. Two of the men were arrested and the third gave himself up. All three were convicted, and sentences of eighteen months' imprisonment, three years penal servitude and four years' penal servitude were imposed.

The story of another ingenious fraud started in Switzerland where the prosecutor made the acquaintance of a man, whom we will call Smith, at his hotel. This 'chance' meeting led to many pleasant days together and to another 'chance' meeting, this time between Smith and his very old friend Jones (the name is again fictitious). Jones was introduced to the prosecutor as the representative of an American firm of stock and share brokers. Jones talked big, and he talked convincingly, with frequent apologies to the prosecutor that they should

discuss business in his presence. The prosecutor was impressed, and finally 'allowed' to invest in one of the deals. The deal was completely successful, but unfortunately the bank required proof of the *bona fides* of the three investors—or so the victim was told. It was agreed that they should each deposit £12,000 in the bank to open an account, and the prosecutor handed over his money in £1,000 Bank of England notes. This new capital, together with the £36,000 supposed to have been won on the first transaction, was to be invested in another share deal about which Jones had inside information. Smith, unfortunately, 'misunderstood' his old friend and bought where he should have sold. All the money was lost! Jones promised personally to make good the prosecutor's loss if he would meet him on the following day in Basle. The prosecutor hurried to Basle, but Jones failed to keep the appointment. Suspicious at last, the prosecutor cabled the manager of his bank in England to have the notes stopped.

A few days later Smith called at the Bank of England to change the twelve thousand-pound notes to smaller money. He was too late: he was detained by the Bank authorities and given into custody. His finger-prints revealed that he had previous convictions under other names in Australia, Italy, and England. He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to six months imprisonment with hard labour.

In this case the prosecutor managed to save his money, but all too often the victim has to accept a partial or total loss of his 'investments'. The confidence men pick their dupes with care, and many a wealthy business man has preferred to cut his losses and go home rather than face the ridicule from his friends that would result if he prosecuted the swindlers and had to admit in public that he had been 'had for a mug'.

Few people can resist an occasional gamble on the Turf, and there are still those—astute business men among them—who can be persuaded to believe in 'infallible' systems for beating the book. Such a one was the wealthy contractor who made a charming acquaintance at a Bournemouth hotel. The acquaintance introduced him to the inevitable 'old friend', in this case a 'commission agent and member of the Victoria Club'. The principle of the infallible system was the backing of horses at long prices before the race and then hedging the bets. Whether the horses won or lost, the commission agent explained, the backer made a substantial profit. The contractor was persuaded to part with £300. The two swindlers were not content with this and induced their victim to 'invest a further' £2,500—which he lost. He declined to settle and became suspicious of his two "benefactors". His suspicions were amply justified, for the Criminal Record Office was able to produce photographs of both men. One of the pair was eventually caught and sentenced to five years penal servitude.

It is too much to hope that these gentry will 'retire' without

making further efforts to impose on the gullibility of the public, and the City detectives are on the alert for new faces and new methods.

The Crime Index of the City Police is a Criminal Record Office in miniature. It covers the activities of all known criminals who operate in the City down to the most minute detail. Its value in cases where the offender has already incurred the displeasure of the Law is incalculable.

The main record card of each offender bears his photographs, details of his physical characteristics, his *modus operandi*, his convictions, haunts, and anything else that has been learnt about him.

A case which the author investigated dealt with a man who had many convictions for thefts from offices. His method was to enter offices in a big block in the hope of finding one unoccupied, from which he could remove hand-bags, loose cash, and anything else of value and portable. He would usually carry a registered letter in his hand, and if he found the office occupied he would enquire for some fictitious name, explaining that the letter had been delivered at his own office by mistake.

All these details are recorded on his card, and in the event of a complaint of theft from an office the police have the guidance of previous experience. Their investigations reveal, perhaps, that a man has been seen to enter an office with a registered letter. Someone observes that he has a scar on his cheek. The Index contains a subsidiary system of offenders with scars on their cheeks, another file with a list of offenders who use registered letters, and so on. By using the system the search is limited to few, or perhaps even to one man, by a process of cross-reference and elimination. And the main record card shows where he is most likely to be found.

Registration of Aliens, especially during the war when so many survivors from torpedoed ships and refugees were brought to London and housed in and near the City, entailed a vast amount of work. In November of 1939, when the *Simon Bolivar* was torpedoed off Harwich, smart work by the City detectives enabled them to discover a suspected Hungarian Nazi travelling under a stolen Norwegian passport. Co-operation from the Norwegian Police and the original owner of the passport enabled a charge to be made against the man, who was sentenced to a term of imprisonment and recommended for deportation (Hungary was then a neutral county).

The City has its own Photographic Department, small but capable of doing excellent work. This is largely due to the enthusiasm of its personnel, who are not only keen police officers but photographers with high reputations as technicians, the principal having been a prize-winner at photographic exhibitions outside police work.

Crime statistics for 1946 show that 2,387 indictable offences were

committed in the City, and that 490 were cleared up, involving 383 persons. Property to the value of £124,133 17s. 4d. was stolen, and £41,320 16s. 11d. recovered.

Owing to shortage of personnel due to the war, the Force has temporarily lowered the height requirements for its recruits, but the shortest still stands three inches taller than the shortest in the Metropolitan Police. The limit is now 5 feet 11 inches as against the pre-war six feet. The City Policeman is easily distinguished from his Metropolitan colleague by his combed helmet, brass buttons, and red-and-white brassard.



(Illustrated)

Print Experts at Work—Supt. Cherrill with his assistant Insp. Burch



(Illustrated)

The world-famous Print School at the Yard



The Tell-tale Prints—Experts examine exhibits

(Illustrated)

CHAPTER IV

THE WORK OF THE YARD

THE huge buildings of New Scotland Yard conceal a variety of activities, by no means all connected with crime, though the public rightly regards the Yard as the headquarters of the fight against lawlessness.

Administration, Traffic, Health, Welfare, and the Receiver's Store are none of them directly concerned with crime. The Statistical Section gives assistance to all Departments, as does the Printing Office.

Some of these activities are carried out not in the Yard but across the Thames in Lambeth Road where the Metropolitan Police buildings house the Public Carriage Office, the Receiver's Store, and the Medical and Dental headquarters.

The work of the Yard is divided into seven main sections. They are:

- 1 Secretary's Department, dealing with Parliamentary questions, with office records, and with such things as Press Bureau, licences for fire-arms, tracing missing people, etc.

- 2 Planning, including training methods;

- 3 Administrative discipline, control and welfare of the Force;

- 4 Traffic;

- 5 Criminal investigation;

- 6 Finance, stores buying and property management;

- 7 Legal Department, which watches all legislation from a police angle.



FACTS AND FIGURES

Statistics can be dull, dead things. They can present facts and figures of little meaning or of no meaning at all.

The facts and figures which Scotland Yard produces in its Statistics Section are living, vital. They have a meaning and a purpose. They point out clearly the areas where crime is highest, the hours when housebreakers are busiest, the black spots where traffic accidents are heaviest.

Statistics even show where ill-health is most prevalent among members of the Force, so that the cause may be traced and the remedy found.

This vital nerve-centre on which so many Departments rely for accurate information has been 'mechanized' since 1933: the routine work is performed by machines which sort, tabulate, and add, so that human liability to err in a forest of data is entirely eliminated.

In the case of crime, the regulations of the Metropolitan Police require that a report shall be made of every complaint unless it is proved not to be after all an offence.

A copy of each report is passed to Statistics, where holes are punched in a printed card opposite the relevant particulars. Such a card, when the holes have been mechanically punched, may for example show that there was a case of shop-breaking in High Street, Camden Town; property valued at between £5 and £10 was stolen; entry was effected by forcing the front door; the offender was arrested by a plain-clothes officer.

When sufficient cards have been collected, they are fed to another machine with an appetite that can consume 24,000 cards, each containing up to 36 separate facts, in an hour!

Not only does the machine sort out the cards according to their categories, but when that is finished it will print figures which show the numbers of each type of crime and other particulars.

Its use does not end with crime, for it also deals with accidents and ill-health. During the war it went on service to assess the results of enemy raids on the Metropolitan Area.

But the statistics delivered by the machines would be of little value without human control to direct them into useful channels.

At the head of Statistics is a civilian, Mr. S. J. Hobson, who combines a rare efficiency with a still rarer enthusiasm. The public and the Yard owe a very great deal to Mr. Hobson, to Mr. A. R. Pike, his assistant, and to his staff. Without their work the great forces which have been built up to strike at the foes of society, whether they be dangerous criminals or dangerous road-crossings, would often be compelled to grope blindly, to fumble for their enemies in the dark.

Mr. Hobson believes that facts can speak for themselves—but he also believes that they should be given every opportunity to speak eloquently. He never presents a mass of figures to the Department concerned if there is a chance to present them in a more graphic form.

"To see is to remember," is Mr. Hobson's motto.

The facts which most concern the Yard can best be illustrated by maps and charts. Mr. Hobson has prepared thousands of maps and charts, and every one tells its story quickly in a manner that is not easily forgotten.

There is, for example, a huge map of the Metropolitan Police area. It is divided into four districts, sub-divided into 23 divisions, divided again and again down to the territory under the care of each of 178 police-stations. These areas are painted in different colours. Mr. Hobson has an eye for effect and, one feels, a sense of humour. London's heaviest crime areas are painted purple! It is significant that these purple patches occur in the West End. Purple denotes that over 100 crimes have been committed per hundred acres of territory during the past six months. The importance of this information is obvious: it shows at a glance the spots where the police must be concentrated in greatest strength.

Many crimes, so the records show, are seasonal. Others are, as a rule, committed between certain definite hours, the hours varying according to the time of year. The type of housebreaker who is attracted by suburban homes where servants are not kept operates during the afternoon in summer, for then the housewife usually goes out to shop, pay calls, or take the children in the nearest park. In the dark days of winter the chosen time shifts to eight or nine o'clock in the evening when the family is, often enough, at the cinema.

Mr. Hobson's maps have been invaluable in tracing and breaking up gangs of smash-and-grab raiders.

These gentry have a technique which seldom varies. They steal an empty car, make their grab, and abandon the car some distance from the scene of the crime.

Just before the war at least three gangs of raiders were arrested with the help of the map.

In the first case, four raids were made in stolen cars. The spots from which the cars were stolen were spread round Greater London and gave no help. The premises raided were also long distances apart. *But all the cars were abandoned near the same spot* in the Outer Circle, Regent's Park. The thieves were obviously unable to carry their plunder on foot for a long distance. Much patient research revealed a receiver of stolen property living in the adjacent district of Camden Town.

Three raids were made on safes in butchers' shops situated in three different parts of London. All the stolen cars were abandoned in Fulham. The task of the police here was easier. In Fulham they traced a man who had recently served a sentence for safe-breaking.

A much larger map-room is now in course of construction at the Yard where huge-scale maps will stretch from floor to ceiling. Information is often required quickly as well as accurately: these new maps which Mr. Hobson is now preparing will show the location of a crime or accident at a glance and to the nearest yard.

Many of the statistics are of practical value to the public as well as to the police. They show in regard to housebreaking that in 34·7 per cent of all cases entry was effected by breaking or forcing the rear door or window. In 23 per cent the front door was forced.

There is no record of the number of cases where the householder hung up an invitation for the thief to enter, but any police officer could tell how frequently that occurs.

The familiar notice, 'Two loaves, please', is to the thief no more than a paraphrase of 'This house is unoccupied'.

What type of property attracts the housebreaker? Jewellery first; it is small and easily carried. It makes up 31·5 per cent, then money 19·6 per cent. Food is at the bottom of the list with only 2·9 per cent.

In shopbreaking offences the order is reversed. Jewellery is at the bottom of the list with 4·5 per cent, probably owing to the elaborate precautions taken by jewellers to protect their property. Clothing is at the top with 21·1 per cent, and food high up with 14·6 per cent.



INFORMATION ROOM

'999.'

That telephone number has first priority in the area of the Metropolitan Police.

It even short-circuits Scotland Yard's own private telephone exchange where girl operators from the General Post Office work day and night in shifts of eighteen.

Inside the Information Room a red light flashes. A uniformed police officer looks up, notes the number beside the light. From the headphones he is wearing hangs a loose plug. With such deliberate precision that he appears almost leisurely in his movements, the officer plugs in to the appropriate hole. At the same instant one is aware that there is a pencil in his hand and a pad beneath it.

He writes, using a code. Not for secrecy but to save precious seconds.

In a public call-box in Grays Inn Road there is a member of the public. Until a few seconds ago he was a casual stroller along the deserted streets, but now as a loyal citizen he is answering the appeal of the police to assist in the war against crime. He has just seen three men lurking outside the darkened door of a wireless shop.

The officer in Information Room writes his message, adds the time—twenty-eight minutes to midnight—crosses the room to where a colleague sits beside a microphone.

"Hallo 6G. Hallo 6G. Three men acting suspiciously Grays Inn Road. Over."

The operator of 6G wireless car acknowledges the message. Even before he has done so the car is in motion. The time is twenty-six minutes to midnight.

The three men outside the wireless shop have broken the grille that protects the shop door. Already they are tampering with the lock of the door itself. A screech of brakes. Police officers are round them before the car has stopped.

The time is twenty-four minutes to midnight. A drama of four minutes! Another theft of valuable property prevented.

Londoners are rapidly learning to make use of the '999' service. During 1946 all previous records were broken when the Yard received 60,095 calls as against 37,661 in 1945. As a result 5,588 arrests were made by wireless-squad cars.

The communications system of the Metropolitan Police stretches like a gigantic spider's web over an area of 700 square miles, covering roughly a circle with radius of fifteen miles with the Yard as its centre.

The web has strands of three kinds, telephone, teleprinter, and wireless.

The telephone lines are private from point to point and run through no public exchanges. They stretch from the Yard to all divisional stations, from divisions to sub-divisions and from sub-divisions to sectional stations. Some sub-divisional stations are also linked together, as are stations on the fringe of the area with those of adjacent Forces.

There is, for example, a private line which connects with the office of the Kent Constabulary at Sevenoaks, and this line is particularly busy during the hop-picking season.

The teleprinter system connects New Scotland Yard with the four District H.Q.s, twenty-three Divisional H.Q.s, and City of London Police H.Q. The system is used for such work as the rapid circulation of descriptions of stolen cars and other property, and the messages are relayed by private line telephone to the sub-divisional and sectional stations. A great extension of the teleprinter system is already in hand.

The Metropolitan Police District is divided into a number of wireless areas, and to each of these areas is attached a car equipped with wireless.

In addition, 'Q' cars are attached to each district. Like the Q ships of World War No. 1, these cars are disguised: their crews wear plain clothes.

What their appearance is and what speeds they can attain, it is hardly in the public interest to reveal!

The cars of the Flying Squad are not attached to areas but are under the direction of the C.I.D., by whose officers they are manned. The famous Flying Squad has its own chapter, as do the Thames Police who are also linked by wireless with headquarters.

Police wireless vans have many special uses. In the event of a breakdown in telephonic communications with any station, a van stands by to transmit and receive urgent messages. The value of this service during the Blitz can readily be appreciated. Wireless vans, too, play

an important part in regulating processions and in handling crowds. Their messages quickly bring police reinforcements to congested areas or rowdy gatherings. Yet another service worthy of special mention is the announcement of Thames flood warnings, now the care of the Metropolitan Police.

During the war Scotland Yard maintained an Urgent Communications Room: happily the need for it has ceased to exist. It issued 'raid' and 'all clear' messages.

As mentioned above, '999' telephone calls come direct to Information Room. Others, on 'Whitehall 1212'—a number familiar to wireless listeners throughout the world—are sorted in the private exchange of the Yard. Here, during the peak times, the eighteen girl operators handle 1,500 calls an hour.

The Information Room is rectangular. At one end stand the telephone plugs beneath the rows of red lights; at the other sit the two wireless operators, one beside the microphone, the other beside a Morse key. (The Morse system will shortly be superseded by radio telephony throughout.)

In the centre of the room are four large-scale table maps. On them are placed wooden circles and squares and boats to represent the wireless-equipped vehicles of the Yard. Each one is stamped with its call-sign, and the officer in charge can see at a glance exactly where each one is. Should a car be out of service through breakdown, a black ring is laid round it. A red ring shows that the vehicle is 'on active service', and a white ring that the driver is temporarily engaged in other duties.

The general impression one receives in this busy centre is of complete absence of fuss and bustle. Yet speed there certainly is. Four minutes from '999' to the arrest of three suspects!



THE CRIMINAL RECORD OFFICE

The Criminal Record Office, popularly abbreviated to C.R.O., is the Yard's storehouse of criminal information. Its work is the biggest single factor in the prevention and detection of crime.

Sir John Moylan has described it as "A national registry of crimes and a 'Who's Who' of their perpetrators, a storehouse of criminal shadows, a means of enabling new crimes to be traced to old criminals and old criminals to be recognized for what they are".

But the C.R.O. is something more than a passive receiver of information: its value lies in the fact that it can, almost at a moment's notice, furnish the information that it has received from many sources and

over many years. It operates with the smooth and accurate precision of a slide-rule, and by means of its references and cross-references it is often possible to narrow down the search for the author of a crime to a handful of known criminals, if not to a single individual.

Suppose, for example, a large house has been burgled and valuable jewellery stolen. The officer in charge of investigations makes careful and detailed notes of every fact and circumstance that he can discover. The results of his search are sent without delay to C.R.O., where each vital feature of the crime has its own file. For the sake of illustration let us imagine that access has been obtained by climbing a porch and forcing a bedroom window: the files give the names and descriptions of a dozen known criminals who make a habit of entering by this method. To force the window a certain tool has been used in a certain way: a new set of files describes the criminals known to use this method. Other features at once evident to a trained detective have their place in other files. Finally the officer in charge can tell with a fair degree of certainty that his quarry is one of, say, six men. The next step, of course, is to interview all six and ask them to account for their movements at the time the crime was committed. Patient and skilful questioning will usually reveal the culprit, who may land himself deeper and deeper in a morass of lies in his attempt to establish an alibi.

Criminals are notoriously conservative in their methods, and the indexing of these supplies information that is remarkably reliable.

Photography plays an important part in the work of the C.R.O., and portraits of thousands of convicted criminals are available for identification by detective officers and witnesses. While too much reliance is not placed on this method of identification, it often provides valuable corroborative evidence. More than once the victim of a confidence trickster has come to the Yard to report that his defrauder is missing in the belief that he has met with an accident or become the victim of foul play. The officers of the C.R.O., wise in the ways of the underworld, produce a section of the Yard's 'family album', and the chagrined victim finds the picture of his missing 'benefactor', who is already well known to the police.

In such cases, where the complainant or victim is able to visit the Yard, the appropriate album is supplied and he can turn over the pages until he finds a portrait that resembles his man. In cases where Provincial Forces borrow photographs, a dozen or so are lent and the witness uses them as a photographic identification parade.

The work of the C.R.O. does not end with the records of criminals. All identifiable property that has been lost, stolen, or found is registered and classified here—everything, in fact, from a valuable piece of jewellery to a cheque. With property—as with criminals—the work of the C.R.O. is not confined to the Metropolitan area but extends throughout the country. Information is also exchanged with other countries.

Often it happens that the author of a crime leaves behind a finger-print, and when this occurs the Finger-print Bureau, which for many years has been directed by Superintendent Cherrill, an officer of wide experience and intense enthusiasm, searches its vast storehouse of records to see whether the print can be matched. In a good many cases it is found to be the impression of a known criminal.

Identification by finger-prints is no new science. The Chinese, says Nigel Morland, regularly used finger-prints for establishing identity, and by the time of the T'ang Dynasty (A.D. 618-906) the practice had become widespread. The same author quotes a case in the Roman courts in the first century A.D. in which a bloody palm-print was used to establish the identity of a murderer.

In more modern times the foundations of the finger-print system were laid in India—whence have come more than one innovation in the fight against crime. Sir William Herschel achieved very considerable success in his District, and his work provided Sir Francis Galton (1822-1911) with much of his material. In 1900 a committee was appointed by the then Home Secretary (Mr. H. H. Asquith, later Lord Oxford and Asquith) to consider the system advocated by Galton and developed by Mr. E. R. Henry, then Inspector-General of Police in the Lower Provinces, India, and later Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis. Henry received a baronetcy for his work. In the following year this system was adopted throughout England and Wales in place of the Bertillon system of measurements. While this system had its uses, it was never applied with such success in England as in France, and it had the disadvantage that identification was only possible where the suspect was actually in custody.

The complicated patterns of loops, whorls, arches, or composites that occur on the skin of human fingers vary with each individual and remain unchanged throughout life. Herschel recorded the impression of his thumb in 1856 and compared it with a new print in 1914. Although the later print showed some disintegration due to extreme age, the pattern was clearly identical with that of the impression taken over half a century before. So far no two individuals with identical finger-patterns have been discovered, and Galton reckoned the chances of such an occurrence as one in 64,000,000,000.

The glands which discharge on to the surface of the human fingers secrete a waxy substance and also salt, and these two secretions leave behind a tell-tale pattern on any surface which the fingers touch, though not all surfaces are suitable for recording sufficient pattern to be identifiable.

Finger-prints have been divided up into nine primary classes, and for practical work and quick identification these classes have been subdivided again and again. For taking specimen prints direct from the fingers, printer's ink is usually employed after the fingers have been carefully cleaned with spirit. To develop prints from a surface that

may have been touched by a criminal a very large variety of media is employed, and ingenious methods have been devised for special cases. Generally speaking, a fine powder is used—for light surfaces such dark powders as graphite, lampblack, silver nitrate (a solution in this case), or powdered antimony; for dark surfaces light powders such as white lead, chalk, chalk and mercury, plaster of paris, or aluminium. In each case the powder is blown on or applied with a fine camel-hair brush.

A more complicated process has been successfully used to develop latent prints on dark cloth. Light powder is blown through the material, and the waxy secretion left by the fingers is often sufficient to retain the powder and thus to reveal the pattern when photographed by ultra-violet light.

The validity of finger-print evidence has been upheld in both the English and American courts. Thomas Jennings, a negro charged with murder in Chicago in 1911, appealed against conviction which was largely the result of finger-prints found on fresh paint. The Supreme Court of Illinois held: "That there is a scientific basis for the system of finger-print identification, and the Courts are justified in admitting this class of evidence."

In the previous year a similar challenge was made in England. In this case the prisoner was discharged on the strength of his alibi, but later evidence upheld the testimony of the finger-prints. In 1916 Andrew Scarlioli was convicted of breaking into a London theatre and stealing £43 on the strength of finger-prints on broken glass at the theatre which corresponded with direct prints taken by the police.

During the last ten years Scotland Yard has developed a system of identification from the print of a single finger. This important method was devised by Superintendent H. Battley, former head of the Criminal Record Office.

There are now in the Yard's main finger-print collection 10,000,000 prints, and none has been included without good reason. It is a belief sometimes held that once the police have for any reason taken the impression of an individual's fingers, that individual is for ever after an object of suspicion. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Yard has neither time nor space for unnecessary prints, and once the owner has been cleared of suspicion—provided always that no previous convictions exist—the prints are destroyed.



MEDICAL AND DENTAL SERVICES

The Metropolitan Police have their own extensive medical service over which a Chief Medical Officer presides with the assistance of a

Consulting Surgeon and a Deputy Physician. In addition there are 160 Divisional Surgeons, and every member of the Force is able to obtain prompt and free treatment.

According to popular fiction the Divisional Police Surgeon is occupied solely in attending the victims of crimes of violence—and judging by the numbers of thrillers on the bookstalls, his time is fully occupied.

In actual fact the first duty of the Police Surgeon is to attend to the health of the police officers in his area, an unspectacular and onerous task for a doctor who usually has a private practice of his own.

It is also part of his official duty to help the police in cases of suspected intoxication, accident, injury due to criminal violence, and rape. Occasionally he may be called upon to carry out a post-mortem examination.

The nature of his work in assisting the police varies according to the district in which he is placed. In residential suburban areas he may seldom have any more exciting task than giving his opinion on whether a driver is so much under the influence of alcohol as to be unfit to handle his car, or in determining the cause of sudden, but natural, death.

Estimating the degree of intoxication is not an easy matter for the surgeon. He can only give evidence of the condition in which he finds the accused at the time of examination, and he has to bear in mind that a sudden shock, such as an accident, may produce reactions which simulate the effects of alcohol. So also do certain drugs and diseases. Analytical tests of breath, blood, and urine are misleading: one man may be drunk and incapable after a quantity of alcohol that is scarcely discernible, while another with a high alcohol content may be well able to control his actions. Keen observation and experience are the most reliable guides.

The East End surgeon, on the other hand, may have his work and leisure frequently interrupted to attend the victims of assault or to examine bodies recovered from the river.

Dr. Summers, with long experience as a Divisional Police Surgeon in Bow, considers that crime and drunkenness have both decreased in the Limehouse and Dockland areas. Twenty years ago it was not uncommon for him to have as many as a score of drunks—mostly sailors—to examine in a night. Now, he says, there are very few. One of the reasons is that the sailors, and especially the American sailors, find their way to the West End instead of spending their money—or having it spent for them—near the Docks. Formerly, the sailors, ashore after perhaps a long voyage, were the prey of harpies who would contact them in public-houses, ply them with cheap and pernicious drinks, and rob them of their pay when helpless. The trade still persists, but it flourishes under cover in the West End as well as in the East.

Malicious wounding and injuries due to street fights are certainly

less frequent to-day. Dr. Summers recalls how, some years ago, he was called to attend four cases of knife wounds which had been brought to the police-station as a result of one quarrel. The victims were two men and a woman with cut throats and a woman with a cut on her wrist. He sent all four to hospital, marking the first three as 'critical', and the fourth as 'not very bad'. The three throat cases all recovered, but the woman with the cut wrist died! The fight started when the negro husband of a white woman laid in wait for his wife who was out with another man. Another woman attempted to intervene. After cutting the throats of his wife and her friend the negro took to his heels, but finding himself pursued he cut his own throat.

London's Chinatown, says Dr. Summers, has gradually disappeared. Not that it ever existed as an exotic and romantic colony. There are still Chinese living in Pennyfields, many married to Englishwomen. Usually they prove faithful husbands.

Drastic changes have taken, and are taking, place in the East End. Hitler's blitzkreig wrought fearful havoc round the Docks. Loss of life was heavy, but destruction of slum properties cannot be regarded as entirely a disaster. The new pre-fabricated, semi-permanent and permanent houses that have sprung up on the blitzed sites at least offer decent and sanitary accommodation.

One of the most unusual cases to which Dr. Summers has been called was a confinement—in the middle of the road! The woman could not be moved, so, with bystanders turning their backs and forming a screen with their coats, Dr. Summers completed the delivery, sent the baby indoors to the care of his wife and tended the mother until the ambulance arrived. Half an hour later his telephone started an incessant round of calls from the Medical Officer for the district, the Police, and the Press. All had the same query—a boy or a girl? And Dr. Summers didn't know!

Yearly the River Thames claims a toll of human life, many deaths being due to accidents to sailors and dock workers, some to suicide, and others being recorded as 'found drowned' when decomposition has prevented full investigation of the circumstances.

One river case concerned a youth who was seen to throw up his hands and sink while bathing. He was dead when brought ashore. Post-mortem examination revealed the cause of death as asphyxia due to vomiting as a result of bathing after a heavy meal. The youth was insured against death by drowning, and an interesting medico-legal point arose as to whether he was in fact legally drowned. The insurance company compromised by paying half the claim.

On another occasion Dr. Summers was called to a Norwegian ship where he found a skeleton lying on its right side in the tank room. He estimated that death had taken place four or five years previously and that the man was a negro. The ship, he learnt, had previously been American owned and had been laid up for four years. Prior to that the

negro had evidently boarded her as a stowaway, fallen and lain helpless till he died. The rats had done the rest.

The war years threw a heavy burden on the Police Surgeons. Apart from blitz casualties—Dr. Summers attended among many other incidents the disaster at Bethnal Green where panic in a Tube shelter killed two hundred people—the maintenance of fitness among the Police called for constant attention. Long hours of dangerous duty alternating with rest broken by bombs imposed a strain that might have broken the strongest. Yet apart from actual injuries, cases of breakdown were negligible. Police and surgeons did their work well.

The coming of peace, but not of plenty, brought additional work in the poorer parts of London. Suicide and infanticide both increased, and the severe winter of 1946-1947—coupled with the fuel shortage—was responsible for many deaths, especially among old people living alone.

Generally speaking the incidence of suicide is not more heavy in one district than in another. It is not in the public interest to disclose the most popular methods. Poisoning by coal gas has always attracted certain people with suicidal tendencies, and inquests on those who have ended their lives by this means are invariably attended by a representative of the gas company to establish that death was not due to faulty apparatus.

Occasionally the Police Surgeon has been called upon to decide whether death from coal-gas poisoning is due to suicide, accident, or murder. Ingenious attempts have been made on occasions to commit murder by this means and to leave every indication of suicide. Police and surgeons are more perspicacious than most people believe over this, and the theory of suicide is not accepted unless evidence shows that the victim had reason, either from actual or imagined circumstances, to take his own life.

Dogs and cats often survive gas poisoning that has killed their owners, being saved by the purer air at floor level.

Under English law suicide is murder in that it feloniously deprives a subject of the King of his life. Successful suicide is therefore 'legally' punishable by death, and attempted suicide incurs the penalties attached to attempted murder, though judges and magistrates usually take a humane view. Formerly, suicides were denied the right of Christian burial and were interred at cross-roads with a stake driven through the heart.

Sometimes the Police Surgeon is called upon to determine the time of death in a criminal case. In fiction he is usually able, by some undisclosed means, to fix this to the minute. In fact this is almost impossible, though cause of death and temperature of the air are factors which help in forming an estimate. In wasting diseases cooling of the body is rapid; in certain fevers temperature increases after death; and in

suffocation cooling is slow. Cold air and exposure to draught hasten cooling. The presence of *rigor mortis* is no reliable guide.

The evidence of the Police Surgeon is often vital in cases of alleged rape and indecent assault, especially as faked charges are not uncommon, and regretted consent sometimes leads to spiteful retaliation.

Yet another duty of the Surgeon concerns charges of child neglect, brought either by the Police or the National Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He may be called upon to testify whether the child is ill-nourished, dirty, verminous, or ill-treated, mentally or physically.

Broadly speaking, the Police Surgeon in his capacity of assistant to the Police is the pointer who shows whether there are any medical grounds for further investigation. Examination of internal organs, wounds, and bullets is a matter for the Yard laboratories or outside specialists.

In ordinary cases of sickness among the police the officer consults the surgeon at his own station; but serious cases—and those in which illness has continued beyond fourteen days—are referred to the Chief Medical Officer whose headquarters are in Lambeth Road.

Thirty beds are constantly held in reserve for police cases in the near-by St. Thomas's Hospital, which also deals with police out-patients. There is a nursing-home with thirty-five beds at Denmark Hill, and the Metropolitan Police are the chief supporters of a convalescent home at Hove—which is open to all members of all English Police Forces. Individual subscription to this is a penny a week.

The health of the Force is good, especially considering the strain of war years, and there is little evidence to support the theory of occupational complaints such as gastric trouble. Statistical records enable the Chief Medical Officer to track down unsuitable accommodation and other causes of a high sickness rate in any particular area.

The question of boots, which the men provide for themselves against an allowance, has been debated by the medical authorities from time to time. Well-made and well-fitting boots are essential to a man who spends most of his working time on his feet, and there is a temptation for a married man to save from the allowance by false economy. Some opinions argue in favour of the issue of boots instead of the allowance.

The care of teeth has long been an especial study of the Yard's medical authorities, and there is an exceptionally well-equipped dental clinic in Lambeth Road, where a Chief Dental Surgeon directs the treatment which is carried out by ten dental surgeons. Here again treatment is free, and the highest standard of dental efficiency for any organized body of men is claimed. The Yard's dental mechanics not only make the dentures but even the teeth themselves, and special care is taken to match these with the patients' natural teeth in shape and colour.

Treatment is by appointment, but urgent cases—which average twenty a day—are seen without delay. Recent records show 917 fillings and 500 extractions in a single month. Penicillin is now extensively used as routine treatment.



WELFARE

Medical and dental services, coupled with facilities for almost every variety of game and sport, help the police officers to keep fit, but the Yard has long recognized that worry is a drag on both health and efficiency.

For some years now there has been a welfare officer whose duty it is to advise and help any officer in a private capacity, and the success of this work has amply justified the appointment.

The present Welfare Officer is Commander G. V. Knight, who derives his rank from the Royal Navy, not the Metropolitan Police. Indeed he holds no police rank, since it is felt that an official status might discourage applicants from seeking his advice.

His work is entirely confidential—as confidential as that of priest or doctor—and he deals with a wide variety of problems, many of which affect the police constable as a private citizen rather than as a public servant. They range from matrimonial troubles to rent and tenancy disputes.

In one recent case the applicant, a married man, was assisted to prepare his defence against a landlord who was claiming damages and seeking possession. So successful was the defence that the County Court Judge dismissed the case without calling upon the defendant.

Certain unscrupulous people take advantage of the fact that a police officer is reluctant to appear in a court of law either as plaintiff or defendant on account of his position, and the Welfare Officer is always ready to give advice as to his rights as a citizen and his best course of action.

In another case an officer was in financial difficulties and approached the Welfare Officer who satisfied himself about the man's integrity and arranged that he should receive financial aid without his name being revealed to his superiors and colleagues.

While the Welfare Officer is not responsible for the organization of games, his care is the mental and physical welfare of the men, and he makes it part of his duty to see that facilities for recreation are adequate. Hints dropped in the right quarters often have more effect than official action or complaint. He has a roving commission and visits Stations and Section Houses to investigate conditions and morale for himself.



THE RECEIVER'S STORE

A policeman buys his own boots.

Years ago these were made by contract and issued with the rest of the uniform, but to-day each constable receives an allowance and makes his own choice.

Not so the policewomen. Perhaps the authorities distrust feminine choice in a shop offering a wide range of foot fashions, or perhaps the average retailer fails to cater for the policewomen's requirements. The fact remains that her boots and shoes are issued with the rest of her uniform by the Receiver's Store.

A huge building, this store, situated across the river at Lambeth and carrying a huge stock of everything from note-books to truncheons, from printed forms to bridles and saddles, from soap to handcuffs.

It takes a staff of eighty to deal with the uniform and equipment of the Metropolitan Police.

The recent alteration in regulations which admits men of 5 ft. 8 in. to the Force has made the Store busier than ever, for new sizes, and new fittings, in each size, are required. To each size of jacket, for example, there are three sleeve lengths.

And even with that range, the exacting requirements of appearance are not satisfied. All day a staff of twenty tailors sit in the traditional cross-legged position carrying out alterations and repairs.

Ten or twelve thousand of each item in general use is the standard stock, and the staff of the Store can fit the recruit almost at a glance.

"The tallest man we had to fit," said the overseer, "stood seven feet and three-quarters of an inch in his helmet. We have one now seven feet in his helmet."

The old hand prefers the helmet to any other form of headgear. It is light—a mere $7\frac{3}{4}$ oz.—comfortable and excellent protection against assault and battery. Helmets are unsuitable for certain duties, such as motor patrols, and peaked caps are issued for these.

Each item of uniform has an official life. Trousers must last seven and a half months before being relegated to second-best, and their total service career is twenty-two and a half months, after which the wearer has the option of purchasing them for 10s.; otherwise they are sold by the Store, and there is never a lack of markets. Some go as far afield as the gold mines of the Rand.

Serge jackets have a service life of four years, two years as 'best'.

The Store, in fact, issues everything required by the police from personal clothing to station and garage equipment, except furniture, buildings, and engineering goods. Swords and automatics, mops and brooms, pen, ink, and paper, all have their shelves. Bedding and blankets,

badges and keys, hose-pipes and printed notices are among the thousands of items that come from the Receiver's Store.

This Department, too, has its museum, though its exhibits are less sinister than those to be found elsewhere.

Every type of uniform is hung up for reference, and a sample of every new pattern of equipment is added to the collection.

Some of the exhibits are real museum-pieces. There is a Thames Division hat made of compressed fibre—the traditional hat of the British sailor until the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Until the production of rubber pillows for the cells, prisoners were supplied with hair pillows covered with painted canvas. These could be cleaned with a sponge and renewed with a coat of paint. One vindictive prisoner ripped open his pillow, rolled the canvas cover into a truncheon and set about his gaoler!

The 'truncheon' was returned to store against the issue of a new pillow.

One item of equipment has remained the same since the Force was established in 1829—the handcuffs. New patterns have been tried, but they have all given the wearer more satisfaction than the police! The old key-and-ratchet style is still the best.



THE PRINTING OFFICE

Down in the basement of the Yard itself the printing works, constantly at high pressure and often handling copy of great importance and secrecy, carries on—a world apart yet a vital department of police work.

Here the Yard's own newspaper is produced, the daily *Police Gazette*, which is one of the most carefully guarded journals in the world. The information it contains is of vital interest to Police Forces all over the country and is one of the most important links between the Yard and the Provinces, for it contains details of wanted men. It is an illustrated paper, but there is no rush to seek pictorial publicity in its columns! The police are anxious to interview those whose faces, front and side, adorn its pages. Other information, not so urgent as to require the use of 'phone or wireless, is also broadcast by means of the *Police Gazette*, copies of which are forwarded to certain Colonial and foreign Police Departments.

The *Gazette* is only a part of the work undertaken, for the Department tackles 99 per cent of all Metropolitan Police printing. There are over four thousand different forms in use by the police, and these are produced here as well as lists of stolen cars, and special orders for



(Sport and General)

'999'—Police Telephonists receive incoming calls



Information Room—The tables are maps and the discs plot the position of wireless patrols
(Sport and General)

occasions like the Silver Jubilee of George V, the Coronation, and the Peace Procession.

There is a staff of over seventy, and most setting is carried out on six monotype keyboards with four casters.

"The *Gazette* has never missed a train," says the works foreman. "Not even during the blitz."



THE WOMEN POLICE

Once an object of ridicule, the Women Police are now a vital unit in the work of the Metropolitan Police. It has recently been decided to increase their strength from 200 to 300, and with this increase more women will be admitted to the Criminal Investigation Department.

The Metropolitan Women Police have at their head Superintendent E. C. Bather, formerly a Justice of the Peace, and an ex-member of the Women's Auxiliary Air Force by whom she was loaned to the Royal Canadian Air Force (Women's Branch) during the war. They undertake duties for which men are unsuitable—such as the care of women and children found ill or destitute, young girls in need of protection, the escorting of female prisoners, and crime enquiries where men would be unduly conspicuous.

The courageous action of a woman detective who was responsible for the capture of a man who made a practice of attacking women is recorded elsewhere in this book. Another woman recently brought to justice the perpetrator of 'poison-pen' letters which had tormented the residents of a whole suburb.

The career is full of interest for those women who want something 'different' as a career. It is open to candidates of good physique and British nationality between the ages of twenty-two and thirty-five, and married women are now eligible.

After thirteen weeks' training at Peel House, Westminster, the new policewoman is posted to a division and is on probation for two years. During the two years she lives in a well-equipped Section House, where the bedrooms have hot and cold water and gas-fires. She either has a room of her own or shares it with one other girl.

Pay starts at £4 14s. per week and rises to £5 17s. for a constable. A sergeant receives £6 15s. rising to £7 8s. Inspectors are paid from £348 to £460 per annum. There are certain additional allowances.

A smart, recently modernized, uniform is provided together with free quarters (or allowance in lieu), free medical and dental treatment, and there is a pension scheme.

"But you have to be keen on the life," a woman detective sergeant

told the author. "It means all hours, for you can't tell when a job will finish."

It is a popular—though by no means accurate—statement that his two years on the beat in uniform stamps the detective with the hall-mark of a policeman. That certainly does not apply to the woman detective, though she, too, must have served her two probationary years. With much greater ease than a man she fits herself inconspicuously into company or crowd. She has no need of elaborate disguise, but can take advantage of that dress psychology which is the heritage of nearly every woman.

"I study my background," said the sergeant. "When I'm in Balham I dress Balham; when I'm in Streatham, I dress Streatham."

One might make a hundred guesses at her profession and fail to get the right answer by a mile.

"Yes," she acknowledged, "very often it does give my suspect a shock when I tell her who I am.

"Rough houses? Not very often. That work is for the men. Sometimes, of course, a woman puts up a fight, but usually they come without giving any trouble at all. I remember once having to bring a prisoner from Glasgow. We had to change at a dark little wayside station. I stumbled over somebody's luggage. There was an anxious moment—then my prisoner helped me to my feet."

The sergeant shares a charming room in the Section House with a colleague. Although it is surrounded by the activity of a Divisional Police Station, it is an intimate, homely apartment such as any business girl would be proud to own.



THE SPECIAL CONSTABULARY

The headquarters of the Special Constabulary attached to the Metropolitan Police is also housed at Scotland Yard.

In some ways this Force has the oldest tradition of all, for it is a voluntary band of citizens who have come forward to help in the preservation of safety and order in times of stress and danger.

Officially the Force dates from 1831, in which year it was regularized by the Special Constables' Act which empowered county or borough justices to enrol Special Constables at times when the number of regular police officers seemed inadequate to preserve order.

Members of the Force are unpaid, though allowances are made for travelling and other out-of-pocket expenses.

Further Acts in 1914 and 1923 provided for a reserve on a permanent footing.

The object of the Force is the preservation of the public peace, the protection of inhabitants, and the security of property in the police district of the force with which they serve. They may not be employed for any other purpose, and it would be quite illegal to employ them as, for example, strike breakers.

It is only fair to emphasize that the Specials are not a means for providing police cheaply. They are for use only when abnormal circumstances render the numbers of regular police inadequate. When called upon, they work with members of the regular Force, and are available for releasing men from duties where common sense is a more important consideration than specialized training. During the war, when the ranks of the regular police were depleted by the demands of the fighting Services and the duties increased tenfold, it is difficult to imagine how the policing of London could have been carried on without the Specials. During the latter part of the war they were 'frozen'—that is, prohibited from resigning unless circumstances were exceptional—as were workers in all essential occupations.

The ranks of the Specials are open to all men of good character and a certain standard of physical fitness (including a height of 5 ft. 8 in.) between the ages of 20 and 50. The recruit undergoes a course of lectures and demonstrations given by regular police officers, followed by oral and written tests. If these are passed, he will spend several hours on duty in the company of a regular police officer before being permitted to take duty alone.

It is now the practice to employ Specials from time to time apart from emergencies in order that confidence and knowledge of the work may be maintained.

The Special is only a police officer when placed on duty, and in this respect he differs from his regular colleague. In exceptional circumstances, such as presence at the commission of a crime or serious accident, he may place himself on duty provided he immediately reports what he has done. It should be remembered, in this connection, that a member of the general public has certain duties if he should witness a crime or if a police officer asks his help.

The organization of the Special Constabulary in the Metropolis consists of a Commandant-in-Chief appointed by the Home Secretary. He is assisted by a small permanent paid staff consisting of a Staff Officer, a Chief Clerk, and three Staff Inspectors at the Yard, and one Staff Inspector in each Division.

The Headquarters Staff work in co-operation with the different departments at the Yard and, after consultation with them where necessary, issue orders on behalf of the Commandant-in-Chief to Divisions: that is, they deal, in conjunction with the Receiver's Department, with all claims and payments; in conjunction with 'D' Department with accommodation and training; in conjunction with 'C' Department with the 'vetting' of candidates for enrolment and other matters; and

in conjunction with 'A' Department with operational employment, ceremonials, and the like.

The Commandant-in-Chief appoints a Commandant to each Division, who is responsible to him for its proper administration and organization, including recommendation of the most suitable men to fill vacant appointments within the Division. He is also responsible for providing such help to the Superintendent of the Division as he may from time to time require. Responsibility for training, however, has recently been transferred to the regular police in order that a higher general standard may be common throughout the Force.

In addition to these divisions there is a Reserve of Officers. The purpose of this is to accommodate officers who have given good service but who, for adequate reason, are temporarily unable to perform duty but expect to be able to do so again in the reasonably near future. They remain on the Reserve for two years, but if after that time they are still not available for duty they are then released.

The Specials should not be confused with the First Police Reserve which consists mainly of regular police pensioners who receive a small retaining fee and hold themselves in readiness to undertake temporary whole-time paid service.

CHAPTER V

THE RIVER AND THE DOCKS

THE RIVER THAMES

NEARLY forty miles of it, from Teddington, where the tide ends against the weir, to Dartford Creek.

That is the territory of the Thames Division, the oldest branch, it claims, of the Metropolitan Police.

Forty miles of waterway winding through the heart of England's capital, carrying on its tide ships to and from the Seven Seas.

Day and night merchandise worth millions of pounds rocks gently on the broad waters of the Thames in barges and lighters, in tramps and freighters. All this—much of it vital foodstuff—is the care of the Thames Division.

Often, too, the water carries sad flotsam—human flotsam—that has drifted to the last desperate step of self-destruction. The records of the Thames Division contain the names of thousands. Happier are the records of the thousands whom prompt action by the Policemen of the River has saved from death.

Teddington, which is tide-end town, marks the end of the Thames as a placid river of shady banks winding through pleasant meadows, a river of houseboats and pleasure craft with little commerce save the timber barges that wind their way slowly to Kingston, town of the Saxon kings.

From Teddington the river makes a double bend to Richmond, with its Royal associations and its park of 2,358 acres wherein is White Lodge built by George I and birthplace of the Duke of Windsor. It bends again past Isleworth and its islands to Kew, where the famous Botanical Gardens reach to the water's edge. From Kew Bridge it writhes like an angry snake by Chiswick, to Barnes and Mortlake (between which towns is rowed the Oxford and Cambridge boat race), to Fulham and Chelsea.

Now in the heart of London it passes Battersea Park and flows beneath the shadow of Big Ben and of Scotland Yard itself. Along this stretch, from Westminster to Blackfriars Bridge, it is a worthy waterway for the Metropolis with magnificent buildings on either bank and the dome of St. Paul's rising above the roofs of the City in the distance.

London Bridge, then Tower Bridge with the Tower of London standing square on the north bank, and so into the vast network of the Docks.

Stately buildings have given place to warehouses and wharves, derricks and masts stand out stark against the sky, and new, strange odours mingle with the smell of the river. Past Wapping and Limehouse Reach, past Rotherhithe and the Surrey Docks, round the great U-bend of the Isle of Dogs—battered beyond recognition by the blitz—past the stately Greenwich Hospital and across the meridian of Greenwich, over Blackwall Tunnel and past the huge area of the Victoria, Albert, and George V Docks to Woolwich Reach and Woolwich with the grounds of the Arsenal fronting the river. Past the marshes of Plumstead and Erith to Dartford Creek and Long Reach where the beat of the Thames Division ends.

Names mark history along the route. Gallions Reach, Deadmen's Dock, Pickleherring Stairs, Horseferry Dry Docks—at the spot where once the pack-horses might cross the river at low tide—Execution Dock, where pirates hung in chains till three tides had passed over their heads.

Except in fog the river is never free from life and movement. Ceaselessly the barges—Thames Topsail like fussy old ladies, and the stockier Medway—ply their trade with 150 tons of cargo in their holds from round the coast and across from the Continent. In the wharves and docks, the clangour of derricks and cranes is never silent while daylight lasts.

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“There be land-rats and water-rats; water-thieves and land-thieves; I mean pirates,” said old Shylock.

The Thames has seen water-thieves and pirates. In the eighteenth century, when the river lacked dock accommodation, it was necessary for the merchantmen to discharge their cargoes into lighters in mid-stream, and there were not wanting those who made it their business to prey on the rich merchandise with open piracy. These thieves prevailed against the constables enrolled to act as watchmen, and organized themselves into bands so successfully that it was no uncommon thing for half a ship's cargo to be lost by theft. Nearly a million pounds' worth of goods were stolen each year, it was reckoned, by the 'River Pirates' who, fully armed, cut adrift the lighters and plundered them at their leisure, the 'Heavy Horsemen' who threw cargoes overboard to be washed ashore by the tide, and the 'Scuffle Hunters' and 'Mudlarks' who operated from the shore.

In 1798 the merchants of East and West India petitioned the Government for help, and a Marine Police was formed with headquarters at Wapping. The men of the Marine Police were recruited from the Navy and Merchant Service—sturdy men, at home in any craft and handy with their cutlasses. Their efforts were immediately successful, and as the Force grew its headquarters were transferred to a frigate hulk at Blackwall.

In 1839 the Marine Police was incorporated in the Metropolitan Police and became eventually the Thames Division as it is to-day.

The Division is proud of its history and proud of its association with the river. Its uniform has never lost the nautical touch, and the men of the Division still wear reefer jackets, though the tarred hat of last century has given place to the peaked cap.

Headquarters are again at Wapping, where there are offices, repair shops, a section-house, and a miniature floating-dock adapted from a war-time landing craft. The five police stations of the Division are at Barnes, Waterloo Pier (the only floating police station in the world), Wapping, Blackwall, and Erith.

At the head of the Division is Superintendent T. Fallon,¹ who as Chief Inspector at the Yard was responsible for introducing a method that has been the means of arresting thousands of criminals and the safeguarding of millions of pounds in property—the '999' telephone system.

Under Superintendent Fallon is an establishment of some 200, with three Sub-Divisional Inspectors and six Inspectors. There is also an Inspector and a Sergeant from the C.I.D.

For the senior officers and for emergency work there are three launches, formerly air-sea rescue launches of the Royal Air Force. With 200-h.p. engines these craft are the fastest on the river, each capable of twenty-five knots and over. They are both manœuvrable and comfortable at speed—a rare combination. The rest of the fleet consists of thirty smaller craft, wireless-equipped and carrying a crew of three, a sergeant-coxswain, deck-hand, and wireless operator, the latter being also a deck-hand as required.

Except in thick fog, the craft are constantly in patrol, each fulfilling on the river the duties of a land constable on beat. The main duty of the Thames Division is, as with the land divisions, the protection of life and property, preservation of the peace and the prevention of crime. No division is more successful. Crime on the river is practically non-existent and organized crime has been stamped out altogether. No mean accomplishment, this, when one considers that millions of tons of merchandise lie day and night on the river, often completely unattended, in barges and lighters.

A very different picture from two hundred years ago!

But there are other duties, less known to the public. Scarcely a day or night passes without some craft coming adrift and endangering other shipping and its own cargo. The securing of these falls to the lot of the Thames Division and calls for a high degree of seamanship. To make fast or tow a barge laden with 150 tons with a swift tide running is no easy feat for a light craft with a crew of three.

Accidents are inevitable on a busy waterway, and here the River Police act like their colleagues on land, directing traffic, gauging respon-

¹ Recently retired.

sibility, and preparing a case against offenders who have violated the rules of navigation or contravened the Merchant Shipping Act.

Often enough property has to be salvaged, and even more often a corpse must be brought ashore—the latter an unpleasant task not free from danger. Serious septic infection to a Thames Division constable from a rotted corpse led some years ago to the issue of rubber gloves to each crew. Drags are part of the normal equipment and sometimes the river has yielded strange secrets. In the London Museum is a suit of chain-mail recovered from the river-bed.

For the still living the craft carry special stretchers that can be manœuvred in narrow and confined spaces, and a CO² gun for reviving those rescued from the water. All the crews can swim and are trained in first-aid.

Assistance is required from time to time by the Customs, Port of London, and Immigration authorities, and the crews are in constant wireless touch with headquarters. There may be an outbreak of thieving from ships' cabins, a departing vessel may be suspected of carrying a stowaway, an incoming ship may have an undesirable alien on its passenger list. The Special Branch is often enough glad of help to detain a suspect before he has a chance to get ashore and disappear in the maze of London's streets.

During the war the Division did a fine job of work, much of it under Admiralty orders. That it should lend a hand in salvage and rescue from blitz fires is taken for granted, but the work did not end there. Armed guards were supplied for prize ships, measures were taken to prevent sabotage (not seriously attempted, though there were a few cases of damage to compasses and electrical equipment), and officers were trained in bomb and mine disposal. Records were kept of all bombs and mines that fell in the river, their position being plotted by special apparatus.

Officers of the rank of Inspector and upwards hold Customs warrants, entitling them to act as Preventative Officers, though smuggling on a large scale has long since been stamped out in the Port of London. The once heavy traffic in dope no longer exists except for a few isolated cases, though attempts are made from time to time to evade Customs duties on small articles in short supply such as watches.

The war brought special emergency duties as well as routine tasks, and these had to be carried out in many cases in a black-out that was strictly observed. When invasion threatened in the autumn of 1940, the Thames Division cleared all the tideway in its beat of ships, making sure that nothing remained afloat and serviceable that could be used by the enemy.

One night during the height of the blitz members of the Thames Division witnessed the sad spectacle of eight thousand gallons of rum going up in smoke. A bomb had hit the Admiralty store. It was good rum, and it blazed.

Not as a rule a spectacular job, the work of the Thames Division: just a steady patrol day and night, in all weathers except thick fog, to prove that prevention is better than cure. A barge loose here, a marine store dealer to be interrogated there, a body, drifting with the tide, dangerous flotsam in the fairway. Little publicity, few thanks—except sometimes from a grateful barge-owner—but the steady work goes on: the lives and property of those who pass up and down the great waterway on their lawful occasions are safe.

And a tail-piece. The telephone rings at Divisional Headquarters.

“There’s a vessel just dropped anchor over our tunnel: will you move it on for us?”

The tunnel of the East London Railway lies not very deep below the surface of the river-bed. The engineers can hear and feel the dropping of an anchor overhead, and its weight adds to the pressure of mud and water that the structure has to bear.



THE PORT OF LONDON AUTHORITY POLICE

Where the work of the Thames Division ends, the work of the Port of London Authority Police Force begins.

This Force, six hundred strong, with Mr. W. H. Simmons, M.B.E.—a police officer of vast experience in his specialized work who has risen from the ranks—at its head, guards much of the wealth of England. Property valued at hundreds of millions of pounds sterling lies on the Authority’s territory by the dock-side or in the Cutler Street warehouses. Police work has been rendered doubly difficult by the blitz, for much cargo is now exposed owing to the wholesale destruction of warehouses, while heaps of rubble afford hiding-places for thieves.

The Cutler Street warehouses in the heart of the City of London are unique in regard to police protection. Although they are a mile from the river, they are the property of the Authority and are guarded by the P.L.A. Police. The surrounding territory is guarded by the City Police Force, which is responsible for an island of one square mile in the centre of the Metropolitan Police area.

Inside these buildings, which form prosaic and even drab bays, with cobbled yards, are Aladdin’s caves of treasures. Here is the world’s mart of carpets from China and India, from Afghanistan, Turkey, Greece, and, above all, from Persia. Carpets valued at over five million pounds without reckoning the duty of $43\frac{1}{2}$ per cent and, for English purchasers, the tax of 100 per cent. Their prices vary wholesale from

5s. 9d. a square foot to £5. Carpets of silk from Teheran with over three hundred stitches to the square inch, each thread knotted separately. Carpets beyond valuation, to be purchased only at the whim of some rich collector. Embossed carpets, carpets of 'live' wool, carpets of 'dead' wool, carpets woven on a commercial scale, carpets woven as a life work in Persian villages, carpets woven by children, carpets fashioned by Afghan warriors or merchants to cover their horses.

The carpets come from the East and go, many of them, to the West: the buyers and the sellers from all over the world squat and haggle in the vast warehouses. Among them, unfolding the precious bales, goes Mr. Frederick Jack Johnson who spends his life among this wealth of floor coverings. Mr. Johnson has made carpets a life study as well as a means of livelihood: he can tell at a glance the country of origin of each, and with closer examination he can state even the village or town where it was woven, using his sure knowledge of stitch, material, and pattern.

At Cutler Street are stored also England's entire stock of commercial opium, tea—upwards of 60,000 chests of it—and cigars. These last are now mostly from Jamaica to save precious dollars, but there is a little store of coveted Havana cigars for the use of diplomats and other privileged persons.

In Cutler Street, Clive of India lived and worked during his early days with the East India Company.

The main territory of the P.L.A. Police lies along the waterfront among the five great dock systems that make up the Port of London. At the Royal Victoria Dock are stored tobaccos worth (with duty) the enormous sum of £140,000,000; and in the seven miles of scantlings in the vaults which cover forty acres beside the London Dock are barrels of wine, many of ancient vintage and almost too precious to sell. In an arched vault stands the cooper's shop exactly as it has stood since it was first completed in 1810. Even the tools are unchanged, for the making of barrels is work for the craftsman, and by no means to be accomplished by modern methods of mass production. A steady hand and a trained eye are needed here: no rule is ever used in the fashioning of the staves.

The origin of the Port of London and its growth to a position of pre-eminence stands out unique among the seaports of the world. The docks of London came into existence after the beginning of the nineteenth century and were built by private enterprise. By the closing years of that century the dock companies were in a bad financial position, and the efficiency of the Port was considered of such national importance that Parliament appointed a Royal Commission to investigate the whole matter.

In 1907 the recommendations of the Commission were put into effect by an Act of Parliament which transferred the undertakings and

powers of the private dock companies to the Port of London Authority, a public trust to be run for the public good.

Of the more important work undertaken it may be mentioned that the river channel was dredged to a sufficient depth to cope with the needs of modern ships. Apart from many improvements to existing docks, an entirely new dock, the King George V, was built, and opened in 1921.

The volume of shipping using the Port of London is over one-sixth of the total shipping using all the ports of the United Kingdom, and the value of London's imports and exports is over one-third of that of all those ports. From these figures the magnitude of London's commerce can be vaguely realized. It would need a complete volume to tell of the merchandise that rests in the Port on its way to overseas markets or home distribution—vast quantities of food, much in cold storage, timber, wool (London is also the world's wool mart), motor-cars and machinery. To fetch and carry this store there are 44 miles of quays and over 700 acres of water in the dock systems, while warehouses, sheds, and vaults under the Authority's control have a storage capacity well exceeding a million tons.

It is not surprising that in the eighteenth century, when the river was choked with shipping, the quays piled high with goods, the lighters loaded to the gunwales waiting interminably for discharge, the narrow City streets congested with traffic, the golden opportunity for pilferage was not lost. It became, in fact, a highly specialized business. General slackness of the masters and mates of the ships who frequently left their craft before completion of discharge contributed to the chaos. Plundering and smuggling were carried on with the connivance of the revenue officers who boarded ships with the requisites for carrying off their share of the booty. They gave as their excuse that the pay was inadequate and that they could not exist without perquisites.

Thus it was that in the agitation for enclosed docks one of the principal reasons given was the prevention of pilferage.

The first practical step recorded for dealing with this menace was the appointment of a police force by the West India Committee. The scheme was originated by Mr. Patrick Colquhoun, the magistrate of Queen's Square Police Court. It provided for a police department at Wapping where magistrates presided to deal with offences committed on and around the river. In addition to a superintending magistrate, a resident justice, and a clerk, a Chief Constable and 200 constables were appointed. The constables, besides patrolling, acted as watchmen on board each ship that was being discharged, searched all labourers when going ashore, and brought smugglers to justice. One other feature of the scheme was the compilation of a general register of labourers discharging West India ships. Nine hundred men were employed on this work, and they were compelled to take their meals on board and to wear a distinctive uniform in which goods could not be concealed.

As may well be imagined, the new Police Force was not popular with the river-side gentry. Mr. Harriott, the first magistrate to be appointed, described the work as 'a labour not unworthy of Hercules', and on one occasion the newly-opened Police Office was attacked by a mob of coal-heavers and labourers which had to be dispersed with firearms.

The idea of a special Police Force had thus been translated into action before the dock companies began their operations, and it is not surprising to find that the Dock Forces were included in their organizations. These Police must have proved their worth, for as far back as 1839 (ten years after the establishment of the Metropolitan Police) the right of search was granted to them. It would appear that they were the 'silent service' of the old dock companies, for one can find little record of their activities.

A glance at the old Instruction Book gives an insight into conditions prevailing at the time. It was apparently considered necessary for the Chief Police Officer to be always on hand, for that dignitary of the St. Katharine's Dock Force was provided with apartments in the docks consisting of 'a sitting-room, bedroom, kitchen, and bed place for a female servant, and the free use of coals and lamp oil'. Such amenities are not, needless to say, included in the perquisites of the present Chief Police Officer, whose orbit has been extended to cover the five dock systems and the warehouses at Cutler Street and Commercial Road.

Discipline in those days seems inconsistent with modern practice. For being found asleep on duty a constable could be fined 2s. 6d. for the first offence, rising by varying amounts to 15s. for the sixth offence. This rule appears to err on the side of leniency, but the other extreme is reached when one reads that constables on duty at the dock gates were prohibited from entering the lodge for clerical purposes. It was explained that a desk was provided outside, but, to say the least, it seems harsh to expect a constable to sign a dock pass with fingers numbed with cold and with ink probably frozen in the bottle.

The complement of police at the St. Katharine Dock consisted of a superintendent, thirteen gate-keepers, two firemen, three constables, and eighteen watchmen. The watch was changed every eight hours, and the men on duty were required to patrol the quays and the backs of the warehouses within the dock walls. After dark, strangers were not permitted to land within the docks and a password was given to the watch every night, the constables and men challenging each other as they met on their rounds. Weapons consisted of constables' staffs; but firearms, cutlasses, and pikes were ready for immediate use in the armoury at the Dock House. Every half-hour the men were required to call out 'All's well' and to answer each other by shouting out their rotation numbers. They also had to strike the iron columns with their staffs every half-hour to mark the passage of time.

The basic duty of the Dock Police was, of course, the protection of the goods temporarily in the care of the dock companies; but there were many exceptions to the rules, and each member of the Force had to be wide awake to do his duty and yet give no offence to those with special privileges. For instance, we read in the Instruction Book that "the gentlemen in the Indigo Trade attending the shows are allowed to enter and depart the docks with their bundles of apparel, books, and samples of indigo without search". Again, corn samples were allowed to be removed without a pass. On the other hand, constables and gate-keepers were instructed that "crimps, lodging-house keepers, cads, slop-sellers, or other persons having no ostensible business" were not to be admitted. Gate-keepers were also enjoined "to be vigilant in the examination of all cans, nose-bags, boxes, and baskets, etc., as far as can be done without seriously retarding business, and in the case of pregnant suspicion of fraud or theft cause the cart to be unloaded".

The depletion of the P.L.A. Force during the six years of war set many problems, as did recruitment and training of new personnel. The essential principle in the protection of property is that no goods may leave the docks either by land or water without a pass. If the goods are dutiable, this pass must be counter-signed by an official of H.M. Customs and Excise. It will be readily understood that this duty alone presents many complicated problems to the Dock policeman when it is pointed out that there are at least seven different varieties of pass.

It must be emphasized that the docks are private, and that the Authority has the right of excluding anyone. The police watch this aspect of affairs, and have the right to search persons and craft suspected of carrying stolen goods.

To deal with the criminal side of the work a Criminal Investigation Department has been established under a Chief Inspector. In addition to the right of search, the Force has also to deal with such breaches of the peace as assault, drunkenness, apprehension of stowaways, confidence men, and the like. In such cases the P.L.A. Police investigate the circumstances and arrest the offenders where necessary, preparing a case for prosecution.

Smuggling is the primary concern of H.M. Customs, but the Dock Force acts as a very strong second line of defence in its prevention.

In recent months a separate Police Mobile Squad has been instituted, and this can converge on any Dock Control for the purpose of intensive search at gates and other points where it is anticipated that an attempt may be made to convey stolen property out of the dock, or on board vessels where interference with cargoes has been reported or is suspected.

Recently, during a search of vehicles leaving dock, a private car owned by a stevedore was stopped and found to contain a secret com-

partment operated by an ingenious locking device between the rear seat and the luggage boot. At the time of the discovery it contained two rolls of cloth stolen from the export cargo in a ship's hold. The two occupants of the car were charged and at the County of London Sessions were sentenced, one to three years penal servitude and the other to eighteen months imprisonment.

Police are also posted at the railway sidings to make an efficient check on rail wagons entering dock. It happens at times that the wagons arrive pilfered or short loaded. In one recent case a truck arrived at Tilbury Docks and on examination by the police it was noticed that the doors were secured by two different types of iron rod seals, one thick and one thin. Both doors had been police-locked, but it was found that a case of cigarettes had been damaged and pilfered.

In another, a case was delivered at the Royal Victoria Dock where it was found that the two hoop-iron seals, although correctly fixed, had a very different appearance. One was weatherbeaten from long exposure but the other had ends bright from recent cutting. Examination in the presence of a Railway Agent disclosed a shortage of seven cases of whisky. In each instance the loss was discovered before it became uncertain whether or not it had occurred on P.L.A. territory.

An example of smart work by the Mobile Squad took place in the early weeks of 1947 while the author was on a visit to the Port. The Squad was patrolling in a police car when two men were seen walking towards a gate. One was acting in a manner that was suspicious to the trained Police Officers: he was apparently smoothing his clothing at the back. Both men were stopped at the gate. They proved to be seamen, and each had seven yards of good quality serge wound around his body under his shirt and kept in position by tapes.

The ship from which they came was searched, with the result that three other members of the crew were arrested. Varying lengths of serge were found hidden in their bunks.

In the course of the investigation a bale which should have contained three rolls of serge was found in a hold worked out from its stowage. It was damaged and one roll was missing. The vessel was completely loaded and ready for sea. All five men lived in the Essex Constabulary area, and the County Police were contacted and requested to search the men's houses, where results were negative. Cloth to the value of £100 (and worth far more in the Black Market) was eventually recovered. The five men were convicted and sentenced to pay a fine of £15 with an alternative of six weeks' imprisonment.

This case provides an example of the co-operation between various police forces. The Chief of the P.L.A. Police not only worked in close contact with the Essex Police, but communicated with the appropriate force in the West Indies—where the vessel was due to be discharged—so that a check could be made for further pilferage before unloading began.

A few weeks before this incident four members of the P.L.A. Police were commended for smart work in preventing the theft of nine bales of clothing from a barge.

While on duty at night in a snowstorm—so heavy that visibility was reduced to five yards—P.C. R. C. H. Rugg disturbed six men who were attempting to remove the bales from the dock premises. One of the men shouted: "There's only one, let's do him"; but in spite of this Rugg took up the pursuit. Although he was unable to capture the men, property to the value of £540 was recovered.

The P.L.A. Force was the first in London to resume its Training School on the cessation of hostilities. Every recruit spends ten weeks at the School, followed by another ten weeks on the ground under the supervision of an experienced officer.

The training embraces all the general police curriculum, together with the First Aid for St. John Ambulance Association's awards under the Authority's Medical Officer, and Life-Saving for Royal Life-Saving Society's awards under a Royal Life-Saving Society's Certificated Instructor (Police).

Demonstration Courts are run under the direction of the Training Staff, and instructional attendances at local Courts of Summary Jurisdiction are made to ensure that police absorb the appropriate knowledge and atmosphere of Court proceedings.

In the last week at the School, after the final written examinations are finished, typical Court cases are explained.

Messrs. Walkinshaw, Wadhurst and Lindsay, Justices of the Peace on the Commission of the Peace for London, have attended individually and sat on the Bench. Mr. L. G. Banwell, Chief Clerk, Juvenile Courts, London Area, and formerly Chief Clerk at Marylebone Magistrates' Court, carries out the function of Clerk of the Court.

Cases, prepared by the candidates in training, in which instructors take on the rôle of prisoners, are presented. Simple process cases are avoided. The types of charge preferred cover such offences as larceny, attempted larceny, breaking offences, unlawful possession, and 'found on enclosed premises'. Candidates themselves take the part of arresting and enquiry officers, prosecutors, and the usual range of witnesses necessary to real dock crime, such as H.M. Customs officers, ships' officers, P.L.A. officials and doctors.

Six such special Courts have been held, and the general opinion of the visiting Justices and Clerk has been that the handling and presentation has been excellent to a degree and calculated to be of great assistance to the candidates in their career.

The School has a museum which contains examples of methods used to smuggle stolen property and contraband through the dock gates. Garments with secret pockets and rough pieces of wood hollowed to contain tubes of drugs are among them. There are also a specimen

set of bottles containing dangerous drugs—mostly narcotics such as opium and cocaine, heroin and hashish—and a collection of opium pipes.

In another cabinet ingenious devices for 'sucking the monkey' are on view. The operation of 'sucking the monkey' is the illegal tapping of casks of wine in order that the operator may quench his thirst. Usually a small hole is drilled in the cask and the liquor either syphoned into a bottle or sucked through a tube.

It is interesting to note that last year an enquiry was put through the United States Embassy in London from the Port of New York for details of the P.L.A. methods to combat theft and pilferage.



(Sport and General)

Waterloo Pier—The world's only floating Police Station



The Thames Division—Wapping Station from the River *(Sport and General)*

THE POLICE LABORATORIES

A GREAT deal of nonsense has been written in fiction and in alleged fact about the aid of science in the detection of crime.

Very few cases (there have been exceptions) have been solved entirely in the laboratory, but the work of trained scientists using up-to-date apparatus has frequently transformed speculation into certainty.

Even more important, it has often given the officers in charge of a case a pointer as to where their suspicions should lie, thus saving days—and perhaps weeks—of wasted investigation.

To those without knowledge of modern police work it is difficult to imagine what type of apparatus is used, and how its use assists the detective.

Popular impressions are still based on the first picture of Sherlock Holmes bending over a table in 'a lofty chamber littered with countless bottles—retorts, test-tubes, and little Bunsen lamps'.¹ The creator of Sherlock Holmes was a doctor, and the claim of his detective to have discovered a new re-agent for detecting the presence of human blood did indeed foreshadow notable discoveries which are now applied to criminal work. Blood-stains and their analysis often figure in the laboratory routine in cases of murder and assault. Method and thoroughness are the key-notes of police work in the laboratory, just as they are in all other departments.

The Metropolitan Police Laboratories, now housed in the new block of the Yard itself, are planned to avoid delay, to give the assistants adequate space for their investigations and to accommodate costly and delicate apparatus.

Such apparatus would be useless without expert manipulation, and the Yard is able to command the services of men with first-class qualifications for the theory and practice of the work they are called upon to perform. At the head of the Laboratory staff is Dr. H. S. Holden, D.Sc., F.R.S.E., F.L.S., and his Deputy Director is Dr. G. E. Turfitt, B.Sc., Ph.D., F.R.I.C. The Senior Scientific Officer is Dr. W. E. Montgomery, B.Sc., Ph.D., A.R.I.C.; Scientific Officer, Dr. I. G. Holden, B.Sc., Ph.D., A.R.I.C.; and Liaison Officer, Chief Inspector Cuthbert of the Metropolitan Police.

Routine starts from the moment the exhibits are received at the Laboratories. They are taken to the Production Room, where a file is opened for the case with which they are concerned. In this are recorded

¹ *A Study in Scarlet*, A. Conan Doyle.

their description together with a report on all the known facts and circumstances. At this preliminary stage the case is graded and passed on for appropriate examination by one or more of the specialized laboratories.



THE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY

With regrettable frequency rape and indecent assault figure in the work of the Laboratory on which the police rely largely for their evidence in such cases. Routine starts with examination of garments under the ultra-violet lamp, the fluorescent areas being marked off. These areas are soaked in dilute hydrochloric acid and teased out on to a microscope slide. The liquid on the slide is carefully dried out and the residue stained with hæmotoxylin and dried again in the presence of ammonia fumes. The microscope now reveals beyond dispute the presence or absence of human sperms.

Blood tests figure in numerous types of cases, and while these can seldom provide conclusive evidence, they can give valuable support to the prosecution. On the other hand they can at times provide quite positive evidence for the defence!

As most people are aware, human blood must belong to one of four groups, and the group to which any given sample belongs can be determined with certainty in the laboratory. Suppose a man suspected of murder has bloodstains on his clothes. As a matter of routine the stains will be submitted for laboratory test, and if they are found to belong to a blood-group different from that of the victim, it will at least remove some of the suspicion, and possibly clear the suspect. On the other hand the fact that the blood belongs to the same group as that of the victim is no *proof* that it is his blood: it may have come from anyone belonging to that group.

In a case of disputed paternity, a negative reaction will definitely clear the defendant, while a positive test cannot by itself condemn him.¹ As the law stands, a man cannot be compelled to undergo a blood test, though magistrate or jury may draw their own conclusions from refusal.

Evidence based on precise tests for human blood was first used in an important criminal case in this country in 1910, though as early as 1857 scientific evidence was given at an English murder trial to show that blood on the blade of a knife had been living blood at the time of contact, and not, as the defence urged, from a piece of butcher's meat. On that occasion—fortunately for justice—there was sufficient evidence to

¹ In point of fact if both parents belong to blood group II, or one is of group II, and the other of group IV, the offspring may belong to either II or IV but never to I or III. If both belong to group IV, the offspring can *only* be group IV.

convict apart from the blood-test, for the presiding judge warned the jury not to convict 'on scientific speculation alone'!

The greatest possible care is necessary in carrying out the tests, and the Laboratory technicians are never satisfied with a single example. It is not unknown for dyes in clothing to produce false reactions.

The uses of blood-group tests may be extended in the future. Cigarette-ends may yet figure as evidence in criminal trials, for 40 per cent of the population secretes blood-group factors in saliva, and traces of this on a cigarette or other object that has been in contact with saliva may provide valuable information.

Another analysis frequently carried out in the Biological Laboratory determines whether vegetable matter found on a suspected person comes within the scope of the Dangerous Drugs Act.

A seaman, perhaps, is 'picked up' at the docks and in his possession is found a packet of dried herbs. Old wives' remedy for rheumatism or harmful narcotic?—the officer in charge of the case sends the herbs to the Laboratory. The low-powered microscope shows a similarity to the leaves and stalks of Indian hemp. The resins are extracted from the herbs and chemically analysed to reveal *hashish*.

Seeds are occasionally sent for analysis and identification, and recently the theft of bird-seed (worth almost its weight in gold in England at the time of writing) was brought home to the culprit by patient analysis and comparison with stock.

Even a single human hair can tell a story. The expert, working with a low-powered microscope, can determine with some degree of accuracy when it was last cut! The newly-trimmed hair has a clean, square end; after seven days the end has become somewhat rounded, and after three weeks it is almost hemispherical.

Here, too, is a bacteriological incubator for preparing cultures of germs, and it is often used for humanitarian rather than detection purposes. In cases of rape, cultures are made to determine the presence or absence of venereal disease, so that treatment of the victim may, if necessary, be begun at the earliest possible moment.

Some items of equipment are rather surprising. There is, for example, a mounted microscopic section of every type of wood likely to be found in commerce, as well as a collection—as nearly complete as possible—of matches. The charred match in an ash-tray has on occasions been identified as having come from a batch similar, if not identical, to the matches found on a suspected person.



THE PHYSICAL LABORATORY

It frequently happens that exhibits are not suitable for chemical analysis or microscopic examination. Often the spectrograph provides the solution.

Working on exactly the same principle as the astronomer who analyses the composition of the stars, the Yard technician in the Physical Laboratory photographs the spectrum band of a fragment of exhibit which is burned between the carbons of an arc lamp. The resultant light is passed through a prism and recorded on a photographic plate.

The practical applications of this method are many. There has been, perhaps, a collision between a heavy lorry and a light car with fatal results to the driver of the latter. The lorry, practically undamaged, has failed to stop. Patient enquiry leads to a lorry which might be the vehicle involved: on its front bumper are traces of paint that might have come from the smashed car.

No convictions are secured in an English court on the evidence of 'might be'. A specimen of the car's paint is burned in the spectrograph and the spectrum photographed. On the same negative a sample of paint scraped from the lorry's bumper is also photographed. The two spectra are identical. Not in itself positive proof, but strong corroborative evidence.

Or perhaps a safe has been forced, and during the operation portions of the surface enamel have been detached and have lodged in the thief's clothing. Examination of the clothing in the Laboratories reveals the flakes of enamel which are spectrographically compared with enamel from the safe. A positive result forges another link in the chain of evidence. Similarly, metal filings on clothes may be proved to be identical with the alloy used for uttering base coins and conclusive evidence secured in cases of coining.

At one end of the Physical Laboratory stands the comparison microscope with its twin stands and enlarging camera. Evidence from this has helped materially to hang more than one murderer. The bullet has been recovered from the body of the victim, and later a suspect is arrested and a revolver found in his possession. It requires no expert to see that the fatal bullet could have been fired from that revolver since it is of the same calibre, but there is no proof that it was fired from that particular revolver.

The barrel of a modern revolver is rifled, and when the discharged bullet passes along it, certain marks are impressed on its surface. Each individual barrel makes a characteristic mark, different from that of every other barrel.

To obtain positive evidence a bullet is fired from the suspect's revolver into a substance from which it can be recovered undamaged. The two bullets are then fixed to the twin platforms of the comparison microscope and adjusted so that they appear side by side through the eye-pieces. Each is rotated in turn until—if they were fired from the same barrel—the surface marks correspond.

A similar procedure is adopted for the shell of a cartridge which bears characteristic marks impressed by the hammer or firing-pin.

Not all the ballistics work is carried out at the Yard Laboratories. In the trial of Brown and Kennedy (*see* Chapter VIII), charged with the brutal slaying of Police Constable Gutteridge, investigations were made by Mr. Robert Churchill, the famous gunsmith of Leicester Square, who has given evidence in many cases of shooting. Mr. Churchill's expert knowledge was also used in the recent brutal shooting in London's West End.



THE CHEMICAL LABORATORY

Of all cases of homicide, murder by poison is the foulest and most insidious.

Fortunately, the subtle, secret poison that slays and leaves no trace exists only in the imagination of the novelist, and it is rare indeed for the poisoner to cheat the gallows.

In cases of suspected poisoning the organs of the victims are sent to the Chemical Laboratory, where they are each weighed and divided into three portions. The first portion is tested for the volatile poisons (among which is prussic acid). The tissues of this portion are steamed, the steam condensed and analysed by the usual methods.

The second portion is minced and treated with solvents to separate out alkaloid and synthetic poisons. The resultant liquid is evaporated, leaving a residue of gums or crystals.

The third portion is also minced, and is then treated with a mixture of sulphuric and nitric acids which destroy all organic matter and combine with any metallic poisons that may be present to form salts which can be identified by chemical or spectrographical analysis.

Sometimes the results are unexpected. Routine examination was made of the organs of a man who had been found dead in bed. He had been a sufferer from duodenal ulcers, and traces of an alkali powder such as is used in relief of acidity, were found in a jar by the bedside. Laboratory investigation revealed a case of suicide. Instead of the contents of the stomach being alkaline they were strongly acid, and further investigation showed that he had taken some three hundred aspirin tablets.

Not all the chemical analysis aims at determining the cause of a death. In the case of the recent Chalk Pit murder the organs of the victim were sent to the Yard Laboratories to determine whether the victim had been drugged before he was strangled.

Often the work of the Chemical Laboratory technicians is grisly and macabre, but occasionally it has its lighter side.

A woman complained that her husband was trying to poison her, and handed the police a bottle of coffee essence which she declared tasted bitter and caused vomiting and diarrhoea. Two neighbours, who also tasted the coffee, said they suffered the same effects. The technicians tested the coffee without result. Then they tasted the coffee. Finally, they drank the lot. Not one suffered any ill-effects.

Their unanimous verdict was that the coffee was excellent.

A farmer whose property was overrun with rats received a visit from a modern Pied Piper who undertook to rid him of the pests for £10. The rats, he explained, would be attracted by the bait and die as soon as they drank water. The best place to lay the poison would be round the pond.

The poison was mixed and laid about liberally that night. The next morning the farmer got up hoping to see hundreds of dead rats. Instead, to his horror, he saw his ducks gobbling up the poison greedily.

But instead of dying the ducks put on weight. He communicated with the police and a sample of the poison was sent to the Laboratories. It consisted of just two things—bran and water!



CRIME AND THE CAMERA

To the human eye an altered cheque or a forged document may appear convincingly genuine. The camera, with the aids of modern science, confirms suspicions and reveals what has been carefully concealed or erased.

Suppose it is suspected that certain words have been removed from a Will by bleaching. The document is photographed by ultra-violet light through a special filter. After a suitable exposure the negative is developed and the erased writing is again legible.

Suppose the writing to have been rubbed out: infra-red photography picks out the original words, illuminating minute traces of carbon from the pencil or ferrous sulphate from the ink. By similar methods a photographic record can be made of the writing on paper charred beyond recognition.

Photographic evidence played an important part in the case of *Rex v. Podmore*, tried at the Hants Assizes in 1930. A scrap of paper was picked up near the body which appeared to be a receipt for lodging money. Other words had been written on the reverse side, but these were illegible owing to the paper having been trodden into dirt and oil. Cleaning with a suitable solvent (in this case benzene) revealed details of an appointment and a signature.

This discovery led to the information that the victim had engaged a man named Thomas who proved to be Podmore. Knowing this the police were able to make further discoveries. They found an order book used for transactions between Podmore and his victim, and though pages had been torn out, the indentations of the pencil on the pages underneath could be read when photographed by oblique lighting. Writing on carbon sheets which related to bogus orders was deciphered by photographs using transmitted light.

In the same laboratory as the photographic apparatus is housed the X-ray. This has many uses: it can reveal the contents of crates and packages without breaking the seals, and it can uncover car numbers painted over by car thieves.

The files of the laboratory contain photographic enlargements of the letters made by every known brand of typewriter. The expert can tell in a few minutes the make of machine on which any given letter has been typed.

In a case, for example, of blackmail by typed letter, the investigator will first ascertain the make of machine used. Then he will make a photographic enlargement of the letter itself and note any idiosyncracies of the type. If and when the machine suspected of being used is produced, he can identify it with far more certainty than a handwriting expert can identify handwriting.

There is yet another laboratory—for histological work—but its use has largely been covered by the other departments and it is seldom used now.

One piece of apparatus that plays an important part in scientific investigation is nothing more complicated than a vacuum-cleaner.

In most respects it is a standard model such as can be found in thousands of English homes, but there is one important alteration; instead of the dust passing into the dust-bag it is collected on a filter-paper.

Particles of dust, dirt, and fluff collected in the Laboratory vacuum are often important exhibits. In one case it secured nearly all the evidence necessary for the conviction of two fur thieves.

A fur store had been raided in the closing months of 1946 and furs worth hundreds of pounds stolen. Only one slender clue reached the police—a car had been seen parked near the store on the night of the crime, and an observant passer-by had taken its number. Later the car was found abandoned. It had been stolen and reported missing. The vehicle was examined by experts from the Yard Laboratories and the floor and cushions were subjected to the vacuum-cleaner. Dust from the filter-paper was taken for analysis.

The microscope revealed the second clue—in the dust were hairs of the same type as those on the stolen furs. Further examination produced clue No. 3, a few fragments of jute carpet. By now the police were on the trail of two suspects—a man and a woman—but when

they discovered the flat where they had been living, the couple had disappeared. But a silent witness had been left behind, for on the floor of the living-room was a jute carpet. The microscope showed that the fibres found in the car were identical with the fibres of which the carpet was composed. And when the carpet itself was cleaned, it yielded animal hairs identical with those in the car and on the stolen furs. Double links now connected the store, the car, and the flat.

At last the two suspects were run to earth. Examination of the man's shoes revealed strands of carpet fibre identical with those from the jute carpet in the flat, and the vacuum cleaner extracted animal hairs from his clothing.

The laboratory microscope forged the last link in the chain of evidence. When the furs had arrived at the store, they were packed in bags made from black-out material: at the flat were found pieces of black-out material. At the time when every window in England was covered with light-proof cloth scarcely over, this clue might seem completely worthless—but the keen eye of the microscope spotted a peculiarity in the weft of the cloth that was identical in both a sample from the store and a sample from the flat.

Both suspects were brought to trial and convicted.

The vacuum cleaner has sucked more than one safe-breaker into prison. The operation of opening a safe by illegal means produces dust and debris. Comparison between the debris beside the broken safe and the dust extracted from the clothes of a suspect often provides important evidence.

So two Londoners discovered to their cost.

Four cases of safe-breaking occurred in Brighton shortly after the war. Detectives from the local Force interviewed local suspects but found none whose alibi failed to stand examination.

Luck took a hand, as every detective knows it sometimes does. A Brighton detective went to a well-known clothing store to buy a new suit. The manager, who knew him, asked his advice.

"Three weeks ago," he said, "I sold a couple of new suits. The customers put them on in the shop and promised to call later for their old clothes. They've never been back. Am I entitled by law to get rid of them? I don't deal in old clothes."

The detective astutely took charge of the two old suits and soon the Yard vacuum-cleaner was at work on them, while experts scanned the cloth for tailor's marks. There were two results: microscopic examination connected the clothes with the raided safes, and a tailor's label gave the name of a Greenwich firm. The Greenwich tailor remembered the customers—who were soon rounded up.

Both admitted having spent a holiday at Brighton, although at the time they were out of work and drawing the dole. They claimed a lucky win at the dog-track.

A very lucky 'win' it must have been, for the proceeds paid for lodgings, numerous taxi-fares, a present of £10 to the landlady and lavish entertainment of a number of ladies to whom money formed an easy introduction.

When questioned about sawdust found in the old clothes, both men maintained that it had come from the floor of a butcher's shop where they had been employed. Experts examined the butcher's sawdust and found it was all of deal, while the wood from the clothes was identical with that beside the rifled safes.

They went for trial and the evidence overwhelmed their defence. One man received sentence of three years, the other of twenty-two months.

CHAPTER VII

SOME STUDIES IN CRIME

THE end of World War II saw a sharp increase in the curve of crime, not only in London but throughout the country.

The increase was not confined to any one class of crime and the causes were not far to seek.

Among the thousands of troops of all nationalities in England at the close of the war there were inevitably a proportion of deserters. These men had the alternative of giving themselves up or resorting to crime, for as deserters they were denied pay, clothing, ration books, and identity cards, without which they could not live.

Their presence in London and other great cities started a vicious circle of crime, for it created first a market for forged ration books and identity cards, then a Black Market for stolen goods, for the men had to steal and defraud in order to live.

Some of them, trained to the violence of war, turned to crimes of violence. Matters came to a head when a member of the public was shot dead while trying to stop an armed thief, and the comb-out of London's underworld that culminated in the arrest of three men for murder, showed that the authorities were determined to stamp out gunmen ruthlessly.

It must be admitted that the British public is not blameless in the matter of Black Market. There has been a general lowering of moral standards, and men and women who bore the hardships of war without complaint have not refused to buy drinks, cigarettes, and other goods in short supply, from the Black Market, directly or indirectly, as a protest against the austerity of the present uneasy peace.

'Opportunity makes the thief', and the public has made the opportunity. Many a man and woman who passes, even in his or her own opinion, as a decent member of society, would be profoundly shocked if a gangster cried to them from the dock: "I was robbing for you." Yet that is, in fact, the position.

Again, thousands of young men and women have returned from active service to find a land not fit for heroes, but in which only heroes can live. It is small wonder that some fall victims to the unscrupulous who pretend to offer goods, investments, homes, or opportunities overseas in exchange for cash.

Lastly, there is an army of adolescents who grew up lacking parental control and adequate education owing to the war. Many of these have scorned to work the hard, dull way, and have taken to crime in their craving for excitement and easy money.

To fight this menace the police have forces depleted by the demands of the fighting services.

One good thing that has emerged is closer relationship between police and public. No longer is Scotland Yard aloof and mysterious, but it has, through the medium of the wireless, come into the homes of the people to warn and advise.

Recently the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, Sir Harold Scott, introducing a new series of B.B.C. programmes, 'It's Your Money They're After', told listeners the series had been arranged to put people wise to the many clever devices by which rogues tried to get hold of honest men's money.

"It is truly surprising how the same old tricksters go on finding their victims year after year with the same old tricks," he said, in asking listeners to pass on what they heard, especially to the young and inexperienced, though it is by no means only the young and inexperienced who get taken in.

"It is the business of the police to bring to justice the swindlers about whom you will hear. We are always close on their tails, but to get one step ahead of them we need your co-operation. Your help may ensure that we catch the swindler before he has had time to get rid of your money.

"You can help us in two ways. First, tell us at once when a fraud has been carried out. Remember the emergency telephone call (in London it is '999') and use it. You will hear this emergency system in action during these broadcasts and how we use it to deal with house-breaking and other crimes. Housebreaking is a type of crime which, at the moment, is far too high. We cannot fight it successfully without your co-operation. By using the emergency telephone system you can be to us what its intelligence service is to the modern army.

"Secondly, and just as important, tell as many people as possible how these frauds are worked, and think twice and even three times before you part with your money. That is the only way of putting these gentry out of business. Together we can spoil the game of the house-breaker, the trickster, and the confidence man. At any rate, let us try."

During the series, which ran for six weeks, listeners heard a recording made in New Scotland Yard's Information Room, and messages being broadcast to and acknowledged by police officers patrolling London in radio cars. Among those who came to the microphone were the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. J. R. H. Nott-Bower, Mr. R. M. Howe (Assistant Commissioner in charge of the C.I.D.), and three senior C.I.D. officers, Mr. W. B. Rawlings, Mr. T. B. Thompson, and Mr. A. J. Thorp.

THE CONFIDENCE MEN

Crimes, like quarrels, require two parties for their commission, and all too often it is the co-operation of the public that allows some criminals a brief and spectacular run of success.

Sometimes this co-operation is due to carelessness, as when the housewife leaves a note on the door requesting two loaves. To the suburban sneak-thief this innocent message reads: 'No one at home—safe to enter.'

Sometimes the co-operation is due to greed and conceit, as when an otherwise astute business man is induced to 'come in on the ground floor' for shares in a bogus company, or to invest large sums on an 'infallible' system for backing horses.

At the top of the scale these are the aristocrats of the criminal world. They work in gangs, and include men and women of education and polish, capable of holding their place in any company. Their organization is excellent, and worthy of a better cause.

Here is a composite example of their methods—and the case, though hypothetical, is by no means an exaggeration.

Mr. X, a wealthy Australian farmer and business man, decides on a holiday trip to the Old Country. For years he has worked hard, and now for a few months he means to relax and enjoy himself. He visits his bank and comes away well heeled with cash and credit notes. Then a visit to the offices of the shipping line where probably he first comes to the notice of the gang.

At this stage there will be nothing so crude as an attempt at personal contact, merely a few very discreet enquiries as to fortune, habits, likes and dislikes, and the name of the boat on which he intends to sail. The member of the gang who makes these enquiries will never speak to the victim: his or her work is done when the preliminary enquiries have been made and the chief of the gang notified that Mr. X is about to sail on a certain ship.

The next member of the gang appears when the boat is at sea. He is travelling first-class, and Mr. X will probably find him at the same table, though certainly he will make no attempt to seek out Mr. X or to cultivate his friendship for the first few days. Then he gets to work subtly and gradually. Probably Mr. X has a hobby or some interest outside his work: the contact man will be well aware of this and will previously have spent some time reading the subject up so that he can discuss it intelligently.

At Southampton victim and confidence man part as casually as they met, the former regretting the loss of an agreeable and entertaining companion. Consequently it is with pleasure that he 'happens' to meet his friend again in the lounge of a London hotel. Mr. X is lonely perhaps, and prevails on him to introduce him to a few friends, to take him round and show him the sights.

The trap is baited now, and it is only a short time before the 'con' man's acquaintance on the Stock Exchange or Wall Street turns up. As usual, he is on a secret deal that will bring him a fortune, and in many cases the victim has actually begged to be allowed to come in.

The head of the gang has estimated to a nicety how much Mr. X is likely to lose without squealing, and of that sum he is mulcted. He becomes suspicious finally, and consults the Yard. He is shown the family album and finds his friend in it. He has lost ten thousand pounds but he is wealthy and prefers to return home sadder, wiser, and poorer rather than to incur the ridicule of his friends by a prosecution.

Without a prosecutor the police are helpless and the fraudsmen go free.

Hundreds of pounds are laid out by the gang to secure a victim, for throughout they have to appear as men of substance (as indeed some of them are) and accustomed to the best of everything.

A detective who was destined to achieve fame as a C.I.D. officer figured in the capture of two fraudsmen towards the end of last century. The men, who claimed to be Russian officers, said they had escaped from exile in Siberia and had found a means of smuggling out gold dust. They defrauded several tradesmen before the Yard got on their tracks. Detective Inspector Wensley (later Chief Constable) posed as a City merchant, examined the samples (which were genuine enough), and agreed to purchase 100 lb. of the dust. The two men went to collect it and were arrested after leaving their house. At first no metal was found on them, but search revealed that one was wearing corsets filled with metallic dust. This was tested with acid also found on the man and appeared indeed to be gold until it was discovered that water had been substituted for the aqua-fortis with which previous tests had been carried out on the samples.

In order to produce sufficient 'gold dust' for Wensley, the men had filed up a set of brass stair rods!

In one case which came to the author's notice the gang formed a company, started a bank, rented a large suite of offices, printed prospectuses, and engaged a staff—all to rob one man of his life's savings. They even printed a financial newspaper containing much genuine information in order to boost the fraudulent company in which they intended their victim to invest.

This newspaper proved to be their undoing. The Law requires that a copy of every edition of a newspaper must be sent to the files of certain places, the British Museum among them. This the rogues were unwilling to do for obvious reasons. The omission came to the notice of the authorities—not, alas, before the savings had been 'invested' and divided.

Sometimes, where frauds are not practised on a single individual, the company will keep up a façade of honest business for a considerable

time and will pay dividends at a high rate—from the capital of its 'investors'. The deluded clients become an excellent advertisement and spread the good news among their friends.

Such a trap, baited by men with keen business brains, has every appearance of offering a genuine investment, but it is hard to realize that successful, wealthy men will fall for far less plausible tricks. 'Infallible' systems for backing horses, machines for splitting Bank of England Notes, jewels hidden abroad that can be secured if only sufficient money is forthcoming, all find rich mugs to finance them.

Against the promoters of such schemes as these the Yard must constantly be alert. Every week the tricksters devise new methods and new plans. Often enough they send representatives to shadow a potential victim half across the world. More than one face adorns simultaneously the records of the Rogues' Gallery in London, Paris, and New York.

At the end of last year (1946), two fraudsmen—not in the top rank—went to prison because their victim had the courage to prosecute. He was a former police officer in South Africa, and while in England for a genuine business deal, he fell in with two confidence men. One persuaded him that a certain horse had been 'fixed' to win a race at Newmarket, and he parted with £1,000. The horse came in fourth.

But the swindlers hadn't finished. In order to help him 'get back his losses', the ex-police officer was allowed to share in a deal in gold and sovereigns. This time he parted with £3,500.

This venture also failed to make the grade.

Detective Inspector Payton told the Judge at Old Bailey that one of the men was a native of South Africa and had lived in Canada and New York. There was a number of convictions against him in England and abroad.

He was sent to prison for four years and his associate for eighteen months.

The victim in this case was fortunate to recover £1,000 of his money.

But his misfortunes hadn't finished. While sitting in Court £35 disappeared from his pocket!

At the other end of the scale come the petty fraudsmen who 'rig the thimble' on racecourses or play the three-card trick on trains. When this trick is played without the 'lady', it becomes very profitable to the operator—as the author learnt to his cost when a very young man!

Some of the larger gangs of 'con' men received a rude jolt when Mr. J. E. Horwell was a Chief Constable at the Yard. Mr. Horwell had a vast experience of their ways, and it irked him that they should come out into the daylight immune from arrest once their victim had gone back to his native land. He conferred with various legal authorities,

waited until another disillusioned Colonial had sailed for home, then promptly had the gang arrested.

"You can't do that," said the men. "You've no prosecutor."

"I'm prosecuting," Mr. Horwell told them, "until the man you swindled comes back."

And he did. The swindlers were remanded on bail so substantial that there was no doubt they would appear to stand trial, and sureties were only accepted after the police had confirmed that they had sufficient money to pay if the men absconded. For each man two sureties of £2,500 and his own surety of a similar amount.

They stood their trial and received stiff sentences.

Their colleagues transferred their headquarters from London to Paris.



JEWEL THIEVES

If the con men are the kings of crime, the jewel thieves are the princes.

Those in the top rank are experts and never work alone. Careful planning and many confederates are necessary for a successful coup. They are at a disadvantage compared with the 'con' men because their hauls consist of precious stones and gold which cannot be spent in that form. They are faced with two hazards, the hazard of acquiring the booty and the hazard of converting it into cash.

Undoubtedly the largest organizations have their own means of disposal; others have to rely on 'fences'—the gentlemen who pay cash for stolen goods at very considerable profit and a minimum of risk to themselves. Indeed, the Yard believes that if all 'fences' could be rounded up, certain classes of crime would disappear: there would be no market for the stolen goods.

But they are wily birds and take few risks. They have no occasion to take part in the actual commission of the crime, they leave behind no finger-prints. Many hide behind genuine businesses and flourish exceedingly, until a careless slip or a disgruntled customer betrays them.

The most sensational of recent robberies in England was the theft of the Duchess of Windsor's jewels from Ednam Lodge, Sunningdale. At the time of writing neither thieves nor jewels have been traced, but the search goes on.

This robbery was the high-light of an epidemic so severe that the Yard has drastically overhauled its methods and its contacts with the underworld. Detective Inspector Capstick has been selected to deal with this particular manifestation of the post-war crime wave, and at

his disposal have been placed a number of experienced detectives, both men and women.¹

There is some reason to believe that a new master criminal, so far unknown at the Criminal Record Office, has organized lesser thieves into a skilful and formidable gang, each member working to order and possibly ignorant of his real employer and of the part played by other members of the gang.

Detective Inspector Capstick and his men have been particularly interested in the associates of Martirosoff, better known to the underworld as 'Russian Robert', leader of a gang of thieves who was shot dead by two Poles in 1945. It is believed that one of the gang may have taken over leadership and made use of Martirosoff's channels for disposing of the stolen property.

Among the recent victims of the jewel gang was Kathleen Marchioness of Hartington, second daughter of Mr. Joseph P. Kennedy, former United States Ambassador to Britain. Her loss was estimated at £10,000.

In this case the house was entered by the front door, the thieves using a duplicate key. A man who spoke with an American accent—real or assumed—telephoned to ascertain when the house would be empty.

In the war against this gang the Yard has co-operated with Allied Military C.I.D. chiefs still in England. Every port and airfield is constantly watched for suspects and stolen property.

A 'side-line' of jewel robbery is the suspected existence of mechanics who specialize in the manufacture of burglars' tools.

One of the oldest dodges for stealing from jewellers' shops is the chewing-gum trick. It requires two operators and is extremely simple.

The first man, well-dressed and well-spoken, enters the shop and asks to see some rings. None, he declares, please him and he is about to go when the assistant notices that a valuable ring is missing. He suggests, gently or otherwise, that the customer has it. Full of indignation, the man demands to be searched and vindicated. No ring is found, and he is released with profuse apologies.

Later the second man comes in, makes a small purchase and departs with the ring.

The secret is that while the attention of the assistant has been temporarily distracted, the first man has embedded the ring in chewing-gum and stuck it on the ledge under a show-case; whence it is a very simple matter for his confederate to remove it.

¹ Since writing the above, much successful work has been accomplished by this team. The jewel theft organization seems to have been broken.



(Sport and General)

A Raid is planned



(Sport and General)

Policewoman searches a suspect



(Sport and General)

Tooting Police Station—Modern buildings of W Division headquarters

ROBBERY WITH VIOLENCE

As a general rule jewel thieves and smash-and-grab men work unarmed. They know the heavy penalties attached to carrying fire-arms while committing a felony.

The beginning of 1947, however, saw an epidemic of robbery under arms which culminated in the murder of Mr. d'Antiquis.

The Yard is very vigorous in its efforts to capture gunmen, and one young deserter, tried in February of 1947, was sent to prison for eleven years for manslaughter. He was charged with the murder of a Jamaican airman, but the jury took a merciful view of his crime.

During the trial the Judge, Mr. Justice Atkinson, commended P.C.s N. Strange and B. Rowswell for their courage.

The wanted man was recognized by these two officers outside a Bloomsbury hotel. When challenged he at once drew a gun and ran away with the officers in pursuit. They followed him first in a lorry, then in a private car, ran him to earth in a block of buildings, and chased him over the roofs.

Strange saw a flash and 'felt a tug' at his sleeve as a bullet passed harmlessly through. Rowswell was less fortunate and was wounded in the head, apparently by a fragment of masonry dislodged by another bullet. Staunching the blood with his handkerchief, he watched the man disappear through a skylight. He was later taken to hospital where it was found necessary to remove an eye.

Another gunman was sent to prison for seven years in January of 1947 after several months during which he had eluded the police. On 13th March, 1946, P.C. Snelling, of the Metropolitan Police, saw a man lurking in the passage of his house. He challenged the intruder, who drew a gun. In the struggle that followed, Snelling was wounded in the thigh and his assailant escaped. When arrested by P.C. Ingles in October of 1946 he was carrying a loaded automatic which he tried to throw away.

In March of 1947 a gang of thieves who did not hesitate to use violence was rounded up through the courage of a detective who impersonated a bank messenger and acted as decoy.

The officer, Detective Sergeant Deans of the Metropolitan Police, after two unsuccessful attempts, was followed by two of the gang. He carried bunches of keys, two letters addressed to the manager of a bank in Kentish Town Road, and some marked money.

The dramatic story of what followed was told by Deans to the Highgate magistrates.

He travelled, he said, by train from Kentish Town to Woodside Park, where at least one of the men followed him. At Holden Road

he crossed over and a voice behind him exclaimed, "Right!" Almost instantly he was felled by a heavy blow on the head, and other blows rendered him unconscious.

He recovered consciousness as he was being thrown into a van which drove off. His scarf was tied round his eyes and adhesive plaster was placed across his mouth. Keys, money, and watch were removed from his pockets. He groaned and something hard was rammed into his side. "This is a stick-up," said a voice. "Keep your — mouth shut or it's your lot."

The van stopped and he was thrown face down into a heap of snow.

The attack was witnessed by Detective Inspector Crawford, who returned to the bank at Kentish Town where he saw one of the men attempting to open the door with the stolen keys.

As a result of Sergeant Dean's action six men were arrested and charged with robbery and violence.

In the same class was the courageous act of a woman police officer, Detective Sergeant Alberta Law, who acted as a decoy to catch a man who had been attacking and robbing women with violence on Tooting Bec Common, South London.

Following several complaints from women, Miss Law walked across the Common after dark. She was followed and a man jumped on her back, forced her to the ground, struck her and ran off with her hand-bag. She got up and followed him until he was stopped and arrested by Police Constable Harris.

Sub Post Offices, where stocks of silver and notes are always available, have frequently been chosen by armed robbers for a hold-up. Sometimes they have succeeded, but often they have been baulked by the courage of the Post Office staff who have refused to be intimidated by the appearance of a weapon, real or dummy.



SMASH AND GRAB

This particular form of crime seems at the moment to have declined in popularity, possibly on account of the Yard's uncanny knack of being on the scene at the time of the raid.

Careful watch on known thieves who indulge in the smash-and-grab method is the explanation, for such a raid requires careful organization with every member of the gang drilled in his part. Before the raid can be carried the ground has to be surveyed, and when a watchful member of the C.I.D. sees a man with a previous conviction interested, even casually, in an attractive shop window, he warns his

colleagues. It has happened more than once that a Flying Squad car has been in close pursuit within a matter of seconds.

The technique of smash-and-grab is simple, and its successful execution (provided the Yard does not possess advance information) depends chiefly on cool impudence. The gang drives up to a convenient rendezvous in its own car, steals a car from the neighbourhood and in this pulls up outside the selected shop with engine still running and driver at the wheel with his foot on the clutch and the gear engaged.

What happens next takes only seconds. One man hurls a brick or other heavy object through the window, a second man grabs the property which has been previously noted as worth stealing. Before astonished passers-by can even take stock of the robbers the car is moving off. Under expert hands it weaves through traffic and against the lights to where the original car is parked. Men and property then transfer to the first car and disappear. Sometimes a second car is used to block pursuit.



TRAIN ROBBERIES

A few thieves have the strength of character to work quite alone, and to avoid boasting or displaying their ill-gotten wealth.

Such a man was 'Cookie', who was sent to penal servitude for ten years to be followed by five years preventive detention in the spring of 1947.

'Cookie' specialized in train robberies, and during his four years' run he is estimated to have looted mail-bags to the extent of £20,000. Unlike most of his kindred, he went about armed. So successful was he that the police believed the robberies were the work of a gang.

The exploit which cost him his liberty was a raid on the mail-bags of the Euston-Holyhead express. He made a rich haul, for the mail contained hundreds of postal orders addressed to the promoters of the Irish Sweep. Some of the numbers of the postal orders were known and he was traced when he attempted to cash them.

At the Old Bailey he pleaded guilty also to stealing £5,000 in one pound notes from the London-Perth express during February.

Detective Sergeant C. Peacock, who, with Detective Sergeant J. Robson, was largely responsible for 'Cookie's' capture, told the Court how the Perth robbery was carried out. While the train was travelling at speed, 'Cookie' pulled the communication cord, and during the confusion that followed he quietly rifled the mail-bags. To avoid suspicion he left a note in a lavatory in which a 'soldier' explained that he had hung his haversack on the communication cord by mistake.

'Cookie' who was forty-seven, had a long list of previous convictions against him.

Passing sentence the Recorder said: "You have chosen this way of living, and it comes, as it always does, to nothing in the end."



CAR THIEVES

Apart from cars that are stolen for some temporary purpose and then abandoned, as in the case of smash-and-grab raids and hold-ups, there is a large trade in cars that are taken for sale.

From time to time garages spring up in which a façade of legitimate business hides their real purpose of altering stolen vehicles so that they can no longer be recognized, and then offering them for sale.

Such a business was run by Frederick Guy Browne, who was executed for the murder of P.C. Gutteridge. It was, in fact, an accident to a stolen car which led to his arrest and conviction.

The present exaggerated value of second-hand cars makes the trade particularly attractive and engages the attention of a large proportion of the C.I.D., since it is very difficult to trace a stolen car once it has been through the hands of experts. Everything is changed, from colour to engine number, and the owner is quite unable to recognize it on sight.

Once the police manage to find the headquarters of a gang of car thieves, it is generally possible to restore such cars as remain unsold to their owners, for the Laboratory technicians have methods of discovering the engine numbers, even after they have been filed away. The X-ray will reveal the original registration numbers, and photography by infra-red or ultra-violet light will detect alteration to the Road Fund licence.

From time to time a more daring gang than usual has its little day, and then none of the usual precautions prove a safeguard. One motorist who padlocked his car to a lamp-post by a wheel returned to find only the wheel there! The thieves had detached the wheel from the car and had then fixed the spare and driven away.

Just before the war thieves managed to steal a new and costly car from one of London's best-known firms. The firm received a telephone call purporting to come from an expensive block of flats. The caller said he was interested in a certain very luxurious model and if the firm cared to give him a demonstration he would consider purchase. A salesman was sent round with a car at the appointed time and asked for Mr. X at Flat 17. No Mr. X occupied that flat. The salesman made

enquiries at the office and learnt that Mr. X occupied Flat 117. He found Mr. X there, only to be told that Mr. X was quite satisfied with his present car and certainly didn't contemplate the purchase of another.

By the time the salesman reached the street again the car had vanished and it was never traced. The theft had been carefully planned to allow the thieves ample time to get well away.

Thieves who required a fast and reliable car made elaborate plans to obtain one. The manager of a motor showroom in Great Portland Street was standing by the window one day when a man of military bearing came in and greeted him with a smile of recognition.

"I can see you don't remember me," said the stranger. "We met in France. As a matter of fact my unit was holding the next sector to yours and I dined once or twice in your mess." He went on to describe with perfect accuracy other officers who had been present, and although the manager could not recall him, he accepted him at face value. The two went out to lunch together and met on other occasions, and it was not for some days that the matter of a car was mentioned at all. When it was, it was the manager who raised it. His visitor explained that he had already half-promised to buy a car elsewhere, but of course if the manager had something really attractive. . . .

The manager had (as his caller knew very well). He had a recent model Bentley, and seeing the chance of a sale he offered a trial run in it.

"Very nice," was the verdict. "If I can wriggle out of the other deal I'll have it. Can't let you know before Saturday."

By now the manager had perfect confidence in his caller, and when Saturday afternoon brought the news that the 'other deal' had been cancelled, he parted with the car in exchange for a cheque.

When presented for payment the cheque was dishonoured and proved to have come from a stolen cheque-book. The car was found abandoned after being used in connection with a big burglary at a country mansion some miles out of London. The 'purchaser' had never served in France and it is still a mystery how he obtained his accurate information.

The 'Saturday cheque' is a dodge with which most motor salesmen are familiar. It is often tried but seldom works. The customer enters the showroom on Saturday afternoon when the banks are shut and professes interest in an expensive car. After a trial run he decides to purchase.

"I'll give you a cheque for the whole amount now—no hire purchase for me," says the customer. "Of course," he adds, "I don't expect to take delivery till the cheque's cleared."

The salesman knows only too well what will follow.

The customer pauses in the very act of writing. "By the way, old

man, I'm staying in Town for the week-end and I'm a bit short of change. If you wouldn't mind me making out the cheque for a pound or two over the odds. . . ."

Needless to say, the salesman who does accept the cheque finds it subsequently dishonoured.



BURGLARY AND SAFE-BREAKING

The burglar of to-day is no longer the 'Bill Sykes' type, but a skilled operator with talents worthy of being used for a better purpose.

Often he is equipped with precision tools and he specializes in one variety of crime—a conservatism that is usually his undoing.

A definition of burglary appears in the chapter on 'The Case for the Crown' and it should be carefully noted, for the burglar runs a risk of heavy penalties and he usually makes sure that the prospective haul is worth the risk. It is even a serious offence to be caught in possession of housebreaking tools by night.

It was during the time that Mr. John E. Horwell was Chief Constable (Crime) at the Yard that safe-breaking assumed new and menacing proportions.

He took energetic—and successful—measures to defeat the menace, for the epidemic was not one of small thefts but of large amounts which were stolen from the 'thief-proof' safes of big firms.

All the robberies had one feature in common *the safes were opened with high explosives.*

Although the work of a Chief Constable is directive rather than active, Mr. Horwell went to see things for himself.

After one particularly successful robbery in Fulham Palace Road he found that the door of a huge safe had been blown clean off. Rugs and carpets had been soaked in water and hung over the safe to deaden sound and check outward blast.

So far no clue had been received as to the identity of the gangsters—they were known for obvious reasons as the 'Bomber' gang—and proved eventually to be several gangs who had learnt the new art by secret conversations on 'The Moor'—but Mr. Horwell decided to tackle the problem from the very beginning.

Before a safe could be 'blown', it would be necessary to possess gelignite (which the Yard's experts had declared to be the explosive used).

How had the gelignite been obtained? One couldn't just buy it over a shop counter.

The next question was: Who used gelignite in the normal course of business?

The answer to that was easy, for gelignite is used for blasting operations.

Experienced officers were sent round the country to check up on the stocks of gelignite at mines, quarries, and pits.

Results were staggering. In the aggregate enough had been stolen to blow half the safes in London.

Again Mr. Horwell went to see for himself. He found that the gelignite stores, although complying with the regulations to protect the public from injury, were often enough wooden sheds with totally inadequate locks. As a result of the information he was able to supply to the Home Office, regulations were tightened and thefts reduced almost to vanishing point.

But there were still dangerous safe-robbers at large and they must be rounded up. By now it was evident that the 'Bombers' employed small-time thieves to steal the gelignite, and if one of these could be caught, vital clues might be forthcoming. Mr. Horwell found that many police officers throughout the country were unfamiliar with the appearance of explosives and fuses. He had thousands of photographs circulated illustrating them. One man had actually been arrested for being drunk and disorderly and had dozens of detonators in his pockets. When asked what they were, he had replied that they were pencils for dance programmes and his word was accepted! (The ex-serviceman will recall that the commercial type detonator as used in the Mills grenade is similar in size and shape to a small pencil.)

At last a suspect was arrested near the branch shop of a big dairy firm. It was the beginning of the end. The suspect was identified as a man with a criminal record in America for safe-blowing. One by one the 'Bombers' were rounded up. Safe-blowing with gelignite ceased.



SUBURBAN THIEVES AND SWINDLERS

Housebreakers and swindlers find a happy hunting-ground in the suburbs that surround London. Their hauls are not spectacular, but in the aggregate they amount to a considerable sum.

All too often they receive assistance—none the less valuable because it is quite unintentional—from suburbia's housewives who hang written instructions on front doors to tradesmen and thereby indicate that the house is empty.

The light-fingered fraternity do not rely on the notices without taking precautions, but take care to 'sound the drum' before breaking in. 'Sounding the drum' is no more than knocking on the door. If it is answered, they have a ready excuse for their call, either an enquiry

for someone who does not live there or an offer of goods for sale. Once they have broken in they usually confine their attentions to cash or to clothes and articles of a standard pattern that cannot readily be identified.

Sometimes they are more ambitious, and there is a recent case on record where thieves drove up to a suburban house with a van and removed all the furniture!

Sometimes a man wearing an imposing peaked cap will call to inspect the gas or electric light meter and will empty the coin box under the eyes of the householder. Needless to say, the company never receives the money.

A particularly mean trick, to which the Yard has recently drawn attention on the wireless, is the 'hospital trick'. It can only be practised on houses equipped with a telephone. The housewife receives a call to inform her that her husband has been injured and taken to hospital, followed by a request for her immediate attendance. Distracted, she hurries off without time for reflection, leaving the premises empty for the thief. Often in her distress she does not stop to lock the door.

A few years ago a man had a long run of success by defrauding suburban tradesmen with the unwitting help of housewives. He would answer an advertisement for rooms, furnished or unfurnished, inspect them and express his entire satisfaction, fix a date for arrival, and request the housewife to introduce him to tradesmen in order that he could arrange for a supply of provisions. Quite unsuspecting, the housewife would take him round to her regular shops where he was welcomed as a new customer with a reliable introduction. The goods would arrive in due course, but not the tenant. And in each case it would be found that he had paid for them by a cheque made out for a few pounds over the bill. He had, of course, taken the change in cash. He owed long immunity from arrest largely to the unwillingness of the tradespeople to prosecute, since they were reluctant to throw good money after bad money.

Most successful of all suburban thieves was 'Flannelfoot', who reached the status of burglar and made a substantial income for many years.

'Flannelfoot' worked alone and he carried no tools that could be immediately identified as housebreaking implements. He was a burglar who never went upstairs, and he stole nothing that could be identified. Money, occasionally food and cigarettes—never bulky articles or jewellery.

New housing estates were his paradise; he would 'work' them five nights a week, entering sometimes as many as four or five houses a night. From the point of view of cash, if not of conscience, he made a comfortable living. For nearly twelve years he stole at the rate of fifteen to twenty pounds a week, an income that many an honest worker might envy.

Over dogs he seemed to have a hypnotic influence, and never once did they betray his presence. He confessed that often enough he threw them meat from the larder to keep them occupied.

The police knew him, they knew his name and address, and that he had the reputation of being a steady, reliable night-clerk on the railway. And they couldn't arrest him. It would have been necessary to charge him with a specific offence: in other words, he had to be caught 'on the job', and with stolen property in his possession.

He had an uncanny instinct for knowing when he was being followed, and followed he certainly was, but the detectives could never keep pace with him.

At last Chief Constable Horwell decided on new methods. He put Detective Inspector (later Superintendent) Thompson on the job and between them they decided that it was useless to follow him. The only way to catch him was to wait for him. No easy matter when it was impossible to guess where he would strike next. In a way the problem was mathematical: on the laws of chance and average the day—or rather night—must come when 'Flannelfoot' worked the area where the detectives were waiting. Unless, of course, 'Flannelfoot' retired or died of old age first!

But the detectives had on their side the statistics of his movements. They chose districts where he had not worked recently, and at last they chose right. The signal came that 'Flannelfoot' had left his house. A police car drove to Ruislip and the detectives waited at the station. They were right: 'Flannelfoot' got off the train. Would he go north, south, east, or west? Again they guessed right.

'Flannelfoot' went into the garden of a house. The detectives gave him time to enter the premises. Then they swooped.

At the Middlesex Sessions 'Flannelfoot' was sent to prison for five years. He pleaded guilty to five hundred offences and there were hundreds more with which he was never charged. The catching of him had occupied hundreds of man-hours, to which members of the public had contributed. On one occasion a detective climbed a tree in a south-western suburb to keep observation. An over-enthusiastic householder saw him, suspected him of being 'Flannelfoot', and pelted him with stones till he came down.



THE PRIVATE MINT

There have always been those who feel that the answer to the shortage of money is the manufacture of more—at home.

At the bottom of the scale of these money-makers are the coiners who produce 'tosheroons' or spurious half-crowns. Their run is usually

short and their rewards at the best of times are small, though the present standard of English coins helps to make the deception less obvious.

One of the favourite sources of metal before the war was the top of a soda-water syphon, for it was reasonably easy to melt and produced a surface convincing enough to pass casual inspection.

No very elaborate apparatus is required for coining, but once the coins are made they have to be disposed of. Crowded public houses and shops are the best customers, but after two or three days word is passed round that spurious coins are in circulation. The police increase their plain-clothes patrols, shopkeepers exercise unusual vigilance and the coiner (who usually employs a woman to pass the 'snide') has to lie low or move to a fresh district.

Some of the more ambitious money-makers are real artists with talents that would serve them well in honest occupations. They have no use for 'tosheroons', but manufacture pound notes. Great skill and patience are needed to produce the engraving which is drawn by hand in the first place before the necessary plates can be made.

Outstanding examples of their work are to be found in the Yard's Black Museum and at the Detective School at Hendon. Not one will pass inspection under the microscope, or even stand up to careful comparison with a genuine note.

One ingenious gentleman found a means of splitting notes in half and thereby doubling his capital. He was caught, and soon afterwards a metal strip was introduced in English pound and ten-shilling notes as a safeguard against further attempts.

Rather more simple is the offence of forging clothing coupons, a crime which has thriven on short supplies and strict rationing. Printers of these forgeries overlook as a rule one or two points (not in the public interest to mention!) which lead eventually to their discovery.

From time to time a big, well-organized gang of note forgers springs up. Its operators are international and its headquarters are seldom in the country where the notes will be passed. Such gangs plan a big coup and then move, half across the world perhaps, before attempting another.

The Yard has its special Forgery Squad which is well organized to round up those who attempt to prey on the community in this way. Chief Detective Inspector Horwell was one of its most successful officers before his promotion to Chief Constable, and at one time his office was a sort of clearing house for forged notes from all over the world. On more than one occasion he visited the Continent to confer with Police Chiefs of other countries, and in co-operation with the French Police he was able to round up a formidable gang of forgers from America before they could even start to put their huge consignment of forged five- and ten-pound Bank of England notes into circulation.

BLACK MAIL

The hardest of all crimes to detect and punish, for all too often the victim is himself an unwilling accomplice of the black-mailer.

The easiest victim is one who has in some way infringed the law and has not been found out. His record is still clean and he is prepared to pay and pay to keep it clean. He dare not prosecute lest his own misdeed incurs the penalty of the law. Even so he would do well to seek the help of the police, for the punishment of the law will be infinitely less than the punishment his despoiler will inflict.

Many victims, however, are guilty of nothing worse than folly or thoughtlessness. They have been carefully selected as people of means and reputation who will pay rather than lose face with the public. They are blackmailed, not on some chance discovery, but as a result of a cunning plot which has landed them—or apparently landed them—in a compromising position. Perhaps they have been lured into some indecent exhibition and there ‘recognized’; perhaps they have been photographed in circumstances that could be twisted into evidence for the divorce courts. There are a thousand ways in which the blood-suckers can entrap their victims, and fresh methods are devised almost daily.

The Law to-day offers every help to those victims who will avail themselves of it. They will be protected under the anonymity of Mr. A or Mrs. X from recognition.



BLACK MARKET

Public opinion is very vague about what constitutes Black Market. Some speak of it as though it were almost a concrete thing, a street or store where one can buy anything—at a price.

There has been, so far as the author is aware, no legal definition laid down, and the term has been applied to the source of any article that can be obtained by paying a price above that fixed by the Government, or that can be obtained ‘off the ration’.

Some ‘Black Market’ activities break only the moral law; others involve a long sequence of crimes.

Consider the case of the man who purchases half a dozen bottles of whisky at £5 a bottle. He has been introduced to the seller by a friend who knows a man who knows. . . .

It is possible that someone lucky enough to purchase the whisky in a perfectly legitimate manner wishes to dispose of it at a handsome

profit. On the other hand it is equally possible that the whisky was originally stolen.

If every member of the public resolutely declined to purchase anything at a price exceeding that fixed, and anything that exceeded the rationed allowance, whether the purchase was an egg or a motor-car, then Black Market could not for a moment exist.

So long as the unscrupulous know they have a market for goods at exorbitant profits, so long will they be prepared to lie, forge, steal, and even murder to supply that market.

The racketeer can afford to pay the thief well for the contents of a stolen lorry or the proceeds of a ransacked warehouse, and the thief, in his turn, will take extreme risks when he knows he can sell what he steals.

Every Black Market purchase goes towards the maintenance of an army of crooks that will never be disbanded so long as it receives its pay. Its existence diverts the police from their normal function of *preventing* crime, and thus lessens public security.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MURDER BAG

Author's Note.—Most, if not all, of the cases in the following chapters have been previously presented to the public. But not, I think, in exactly this form. In each instance the problem has been set out as far as possible as it confronted the investigating detectives, and their work has been described step by step. For this reason events have been detailed as they were discovered and not necessarily in chronological order.

SCOTLAND YARD has a number of Chief Detective Inspectors, and they work on a rota.

When information of a murder or serious crime is received, the Chief Inspector whose name at the time heads the list will be detailed for the investigation and summoned at once for duty, even if he is at home and in bed.

If the call comes from a provincial Force, he will take with him one or more Detective Sergeants, and on his arrival he will work under the Chief Constable of the Force concerned, with all the resources of that Force to assist him.

And he will take one of the 'murder bags' that always stand ready and packed.

The 'murder bag' contains everything he is likely to need to aid him in his investigations—tape measure, magnifying-glass, string, packing for exhibits, dusting-powder for finger-prints, even pins.

He is unlikely to need all the contents, for he prefers to call in experts to do the work where possible. He has all the resources of the Yard behind him, even down to a special squad of detectives ready to follow up any trails which lead to London.

The telephone bell rings. . . . The call goes out for Chief Inspector . . .



MURDER IN A CROWDED STREET

Shortly after two-thirty on the afternoon of 29th April, 1947, three men drove up in a Vauxhall car to the premises of Jay's, jewellers and pawnbrokers, on the corner of Charlotte Street and Tottenham Street, adjoining one of London's busiest thoroughfares.

The streets were crowded and nobody took particular notice of the three men who got out of the car.

One of the men entered the shop by the side door and the other two made their way through the main entrance. As they went in they pulled handkerchiefs over the lower parts of their faces.

Mr. A. E. Stock, the manager, and his five assistants found themselves staring at the muzzles of revolvers.

One of the assistants, a youth of seventeen, threw a stool at one of the bandits. It missed, and assistant and bandit fell struggling to the floor. A shot was fired—harmlessly—and the second bandit threw his revolver at another assistant.

Mr. Stock, coming forward to apprehend the man, was struck on the head with the butts of revolvers.

A passer-by noticed the struggle in the shop.

"Police!" he shouted.

The bandits turned and ran into the street pursued by Mr. Stock, blood pouring from his head. He struggled forward a few paces, then collapsed.

The three bandits jumped in the car and made frantic efforts to start it. As it started a lorry blocked its path. Brandishing their revolvers they jumped out.

It was at this moment that Mr. Alec d'Antiquis, a garage proprietor of South London, rode by on a motor-cycle. Jumping off his machine he thrust it forward to intercept the men. One bandit turned and fired at point-blank range. Mr. d'Antiquis fell mortally wounded.

The alarm had now been raised. To the accompaniment of police whistles the three men ran down a mews, while pedestrians scattered and took cover from the threatening revolvers. The mews proved to be a blind alley, and the men doubled back into Tottenham Court Road where they disappeared.

Mr. d'Antiquis and Mr. Stock were taken to Middlesex Hospital. Mr. d'Antiquis died on the way, but Mr. Stock was able to leave after treatment.

Chief Inspector Fabian, former head of the Flying Squad, took charge of enquiries and was quickly on the scene with Superintendent Cherrill, head of the Finger-print Bureau.

The car, which had been stolen from a street near the scene of the crime, was driven to the Yard after special precautions had been taken to avoid smearing any finger-prints on the wheel.

Statements were taken from many people who had been near the scene, and before midnight detectives were checking up on lodgers at London hostels, while others watched railway and bus termini. Provincial Forces were asked to keep watch on stations and bus-stops.

For some time there was no news of the three men.

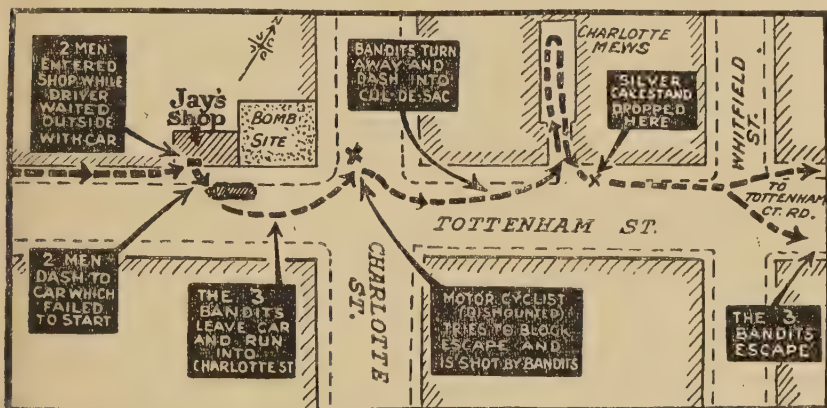
Mr. Ronald Howe, head of the C.I.D., had to make a decision. Either he could put such experienced men as were available on the case and let their enquiries take their usual course, or he could throw

the whole strength of the C.I.D. into the hunt. If he took the latter course he would be staking the reputation of the Yard.

Murder had been committed in broad daylight in a London street. If the murderers escaped it would be an invitation to the forces of lawlessness to copy their example.

The Yard made its decision. Every detective that could possibly be withdrawn from routine and special duties was put on the case. A thousand police officers were engaged on the hunt.

The hunt went on, statements were taken—literally hundreds of statements—clues were examined, messages exchanged with other Forces. Every police officer in England was on the look-out for the murderers of Mr. d'Antiquis.



Rep. by Courtesy of The Daily Telegraph

Public apprehension grew as the days passed.

On 20th May, three weeks after the murder, three men appeared at Marlborough Street Police Court, charged with murder. Their ages were twenty-three, twenty, and seventeen.

After various remands the prosecution opened its case. A statement, alleged to have been made by the twenty-year-old man, was read in court. It stated that he fired the shot which killed Mr. d'Antiquis.

"He got in our way. I fired off, intending to frighten him."

All were found guilty: two were hanged, the third, only 17, was sent to prison during His Majesty's pleasure.



THE MEN WHO SLEW A POLICEMAN

In the early hours of 27th September, 1927, occurred a crime that shocked England with its brutality and put Scotland Yard and every other Police Force concerned on their mettle.

In the very act of doing his duty P.C. Gutteridge of the Essex Constabulary was shot down. He was found by the roadside with four bullet wounds in his head, each fired from a distance of about ten inches. A shot had been fired through each eye, and it was believed by some at the time that the murderer had done this out of superstition. There is an old belief that a picture of the murderer is imprinted in the victim's eyes. The fact remains that three out of the four wounds would each have proved fatal.

Beside the dead constable was his note-book: his pencil was gripped in his right hand, and his whistle was hanging loose.

It was not until 20th January of the following year that a man was arrested, and at first he was charged only with the theft of a motor-car. Already the public had dismissed the case as another unsolved mystery, but the long delay was chiefly due to the necessity under English law of presenting a complete and cast-iron case to the Court.

The Chief Constable of the Essex Police had decided at once to call in the help of Scotland Yard, and the same afternoon a chief inspector and a detective sergeant took over the case in co-operation with the Essex Constabulary.

In charge was Chief Inspector James Berrett, bearded, burly, and Edwardian in his appearance, and under him worked a large number of very able detective officers.

Every inch of the ground surrounding the spot where the body had lain was searched, and photographs and measurements taken. Results on the whole were disappointing, but there were signs that a car had collided with the grass bank.

News had already been received that a doctor's car had been stolen from the village of Billericay, some ten miles away, and the inference was that the thief or thieves had been challenged by P.C. Gutteridge and had shot him. It seemed unlikely, however, that an ordinary motor-car thief would resort to such desperate means in order to escape, and the theory was not accepted as certain.

Before the case was complete, over a thousand persons were interviewed, and though most of their information was worthless, enough was learnt to start on tracing the route taken by the stolen car. Over five hundred houses were then visited by detective officers, and at last it was possible to determine it with fair accuracy. It was a roundabout route which followed country lanes and avoided main roads where police might have been expected to be on duty. It was now probable that the theft of the car was connected with the murder.

One or two false trails hindered investigation. There was the usual crop of bogus confessions, one so plausible that detectives drove through thick fog to Basingstoke. Questions put to the detained man revealed that he was an epileptic who had previously tried to give himself up for another murder!

A revolver and a box of cartridges were found beside the Thames,



G. H. Higgins

Mr. d'Antiquis mortally wounded



The River Patrol—A turn near Tower Bridge

(Illustrated)

but they were soon proved by the experts to have no connection with the crime.

In the meantime the records of the C.R.O. were being searched for names of known criminals who might be expected to kill brutally if stopped. A certain ex-convict was missing from his registered address, where he had left a bloodstained bandage and newspaper cuttings of the crime. The man eventually turned up and was able to clear himself of complicity in the crime.

While these inquiries were in progress a post-mortem examination was held and one of the bullets was recovered. It was also found that the face of the murdered man had been marked by black powder of a type that had not been used in revolver cartridges for many years.

Attention was turned to the stolen car which had been found at Brixton. In it was found a spent revolver shell, there were bloodstains on the running-board, and traces of earth on the tyres were identical with the earth on the bank beside which Gutteridge's body had lain.

Of the spent cartridge the Solicitor-General (Sir Boyd Merriman, K.C., M.P.) who opened the case for the Crown said: "This cartridge-case is a small clue, but imprinted upon it is the most cogent and conclusive evidence."

Two facts were now reasonably certain: the murder had been committed by the man or men who stole the doctor's car from Billericay, and they had in their possession ammunition of an obsolete pattern.

Chief Inspector Berrett had a wide experience of the ways of motor-car thieves, and he had already come to the conclusion that an ex-convict named Frederick Guy Browne had been concerned in the crime. His opinion was further strengthened by the knowledge that Browne had once owned a motor business in the neighbourhood of the crime. The stolen car had been driven fast along narrow lanes in the dark, and that seemed to prove the driver was completely familiar with the district.

Browne had not so far been traced, but one day in November a van was forced against a wall in Sheffield while trying to avoid a private car. The van driver reported the incident to the police and a summons was taken out against the driver of the car.

It was one thing to issue the summons, quite another to deliver it. The address given by the car driver was false, and the car he had been driving was a stolen one. Fortunately for justice, there had been a passenger in the car, and he wrote to the Sheffield Police that the man they were looking for was Frederick Guy Browne—an old acquaintance, for he had met him in Dartmoor. The informant later wrote to Scotland Yard offering to give information about a series of hold-ups by motor bandits. He ended with the significant statement that if the police arrested the two men responsible for the hold-ups, it was a thousand to one they would have the murderers of P.C. Gutteridge.

Browne was traced to Battersea where he was running a garage business, and elaborate precautions were taken for his arrest.

On the evening of 20th January, nearly four months after the murder, Browne drove into his garage. He had just returned from meeting a released convict at Dartmoor. Unsuspecting, he stepped from his car and walked towards his office.

Instantly, before he had time to draw one of the many weapons he possessed, he was seized.

The arrested man was taken into custody, and his premises were searched. Significant discoveries were made. First a pair of surgical forceps similar to those left by the Billericay doctor in his car. In the man's hip-pocket were twelve Service cartridges, one of them similar to the cartridge from which a bullet had been fired at P.C. Gutteridge.

"That's done it. Now you have found them, it's all up with me," exclaimed Browne, though he was only charged with stealing a car.

The detectives continued the search. They found a stockinette mask and a fully-loaded revolver, the latter in Browne's car. More surgical instruments and ammunition were found at Browne's house, as well as more revolvers, and when he was told of the discovery he boasted: "If you had stopped me while I was in the car, I should have shot five of you and saved the other one for myself."

But he denied any complicity in the murder of the police constable, explaining that he had bought the revolver from a sailor at the docks. He claimed that he had bought the surgical instruments at various chemists "in case of accidents".

On 25th January Detective Sergeant Mattinson of Liverpool arrested a man named William Henry Kennedy, whose photograph had been identified by an ex-employee of Browne who recognized it as of an associate of his late employer.

"Stand back," shouted Kennedy, flourishing an automatic pistol, "or I'll kill you."

He pressed the trigger, but the safety-catch was down and the pistol failed to fire.

"It is all up now you've got me," he said, on his way to the station.

He was taken to Scotland Yard where Chief Inspector Berrett confronted him. "You are detained," said Berrett, "on a charge of being concerned with stealing a Vauxhall motor-car, and I have been making inquiries for some time past respecting the murder of P.C. Gutteridge. Can you give me any information about the occurrence?"

Kennedy sat with his head in his hands. "I may be able to tell you something," he replied, "but let me consider." Then he asked: "Can I see my wife?"

Mrs. Kennedy, who had come to London with him, was brought in.

"I told you there was something more serious at the back of it," he said. "Well, there is. These officers are making inquiries about that policeman who was murdered in Essex."

"Why, you didn't murder him, did you?" asked Mrs. Kennedy in alarm.

"No, I didn't; but I was there and know who did," came the significant reply. "If I am charged with murder and found guilty I shall be hanged and you will be a widow. On the other hand, if I am charged and found guilty of being an accessory after the fact I shall receive a severe sentence of penal servitude and be a long time from you. Will you wait for me?"

"Yes, love, I will wait for you any time," she said in a low voice.

"Well, what shall I do then?"

"Tell these gentlemen the truth of what took place."

Kennedy turned to Inspector Berrett. "You can take down what I want to say and I will sign it."

The statement was long. It described how Kennedy went to work at Browne's garage and how together they stole a car at Billericay.

It described how Browne, who was driving, pulled up when signalled by a police constable, who flashed a torch on the car.

From Kennedy's account of the conversation that followed it seems clear that the police officer already had his suspicions about the ownership of the car which Kennedy claimed to be his.

"Do you know the number of the car?" asked P.C. Gutteridge.

Browne exclaimed: "You'll see it on the front."

"I know the number," said Gutteridge; "but do you?"

The statement continued with gathering drama.

"The policeman put his torch back in his pocket and pulled out his note-book and was in the act of writing when I heard a report, quickly followed by another one. I saw the policeman stagger back and fall over by the bank at the hedge. I said to Browne: 'What have you done?' and then saw he had a large Webley revolver in his hand.

"He said: 'Get out, quick.' I immediately got out and went round to the policeman who was lying on his back, and Browne came over and said: 'I'll finish the ——' And I said: 'For God's sake don't shoot any more, the man's dying,' as he was groaning.

"The policeman's eyes were open, and Browne, addressing him, said: 'What are you looking at me like that for?' and stooping down he shot him at close range through both eyes."

The two men were charged with murder and committed for trial.

They were tried together before Mr. Justice Avory after applications for separate trials had failed.

The hearing revealed the painstaking care with which Inspector Berrett and the police had built up the case and pieced together the clues.

Detective Sergeant Charles Hearn, for example, explained how he had driven the stolen car along the route described by Kennedy and found that the mileage was roughly what he would have expected. He was aided in this by the owner of the car, who made a habit of noting his daily mileage and who gave evidence that the car had been driven just over forty-three miles after it had been stolen.

Mr. Robert Churchill, the gunsmith who had helped the police investigations on numerous occasions, gave damning evidence about the revolver and the three bullets that had been recovered.

"Under microscopic examination," he declared, "it is possible for me to see that this cartridge was fired from this revolver."

Even more emphatic was the testimony of William Fox, Chief Examiner at the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield.

"I do not give an opinion: I say that case was fired from that revolver."

Mr. Justice Avory: "You mean to say that without doubt?"

"Absolutely, my lord."

Photographic enlargements were then handed to the jury to explain the marks on the shells made by the breech-shield of Browne's revolver.

Mr. Frank Powell (now a Metropolitan Magistrate) who defended Kennedy, submitted that the prosecution must prove not only that his client was present, but that he knew the other man was armed and that firearms would be used.

The Judge ruled that there was a case for Kennedy to answer.

In court Browne maintained his ignorance of the whole affair.

"You are first of all building on a rotten foundation; you are building on a foundation of lies," he declared.

"Scratch out the name Browne and put in the name of his (Kennedy's) confederate he was boozing with," he said later.

In his final speech for Browne, Mr. E. F. Lever, his counsel, pointed out that under English law the statement made by Kennedy was not evidence against Browne, but only against Kennedy himself. The irresistible inference, he went on, was that the weapon from which the shots were fired was the property of Kennedy and not of Browne.

The verdict was inevitable. Both men were found guilty and sentenced to death.

At the conclusion the Judge said: "With regard to the conduct of the police generally, the result in this case is the best testimony to the great ability which has been shown by all of those who have been concerned in this investigation. They are, in my opinion, deserving of the highest commendation."

Both men appealed, but their appeals were dismissed.

It should be added that both the perpetrators of this foul and brutal murder were men with criminal records. But they were found guilty on the evidence before the Court and not on the evidence of their previous crimes. Not one word of their past—such is the scrupulous fairness of the Law—was made public before the jury had reached its verdict.

CHAPTER IX

THE MURDER BAG (*continued*)

MRS. ANNE LOUISA KEMPSON, of Oxford, arranged to spend the August Bank Holiday of 1931 with relatives in London.

She had written to say that she would arrive on the Sunday and had named the time at which the motor-coach was due.

She failed to appear, and her relatives sent her a telegram which was unanswered.

Becoming anxious, the relatives telephoned to other relatives in Oxford asking them to go round to Mrs. Kempson's house to make sure she was all right.

A call was made at the house, which was locked, but no reply was received.

By Monday afternoon the relatives were alarmed, and one of them borrowed a ladder and entered the house by a bedroom window.

Downstairs on the floor of the dining-room he found Mrs. Kempson lying on the floor, dead.

There was no doubt as to the cause of death, for there were terrible head and throat injuries.

Immediately the relative informed the Oxford Police. After visiting the house, the Oxford Police requested the help of Scotland Yard.

Chief Inspector Horwell's¹ name headed the rota on that day. At ten o'clock in the evening, while he was sitting at home, he received instructions to catch the midnight train to Oxford. Two junior officers would meet him at the station with the 'murder bag'.

The three arrived at Oxford in the small hours of the morning—in the pouring rain—and were met by the Chief Constable of the City. The party drove to Mrs. Kempson's house, a small semi-detached villa in the suburbs.

Chief Inspector Horwell examined the body and found two wounds on the head that had been caused by some blunt instrument, probably a hammer. There was also a punctured wound through the throat made by some sharp instrument which had entered below the left ear and penetrated to the right.

The detectives turned their attention to the house. There was evidence that it had been hastily ransacked. Among the items discovered were three purses, all empty. On the settee in the lounge,

¹ Afterwards Chief Constable. Mr. Horwell's description of the case—together with many other incidents in his distinguished career at the Yard—will be found in his own book, *Horwell of the Yard*. Andrew Melrose, 18s.

directly under the window, was a parcel containing a new pair of shoes. The shoes were soon explained. On the previous Friday Mrs. Kempson had been shopping with a relation and had purchased the shoes. The relation took them home by mistake and came on the following day to return them. She failed to get a reply when she knocked, so she raised the lounge window, dropped the parcel on the settee and closed the window again.

In the meantime Sir Bernard Spilsbury, the famous Home Office pathologist, had held a post mortem on the body. He confirmed that the blows on the head had been caused by a hammer and that a dagger, or something similar, had been thrust through the throat. Death had taken place shortly after a meal.

This last information tallied with what Chief Inspector Horwell had already discovered, for the remains of breakfast were still on the kitchen table. Neighbours described Mrs. Kempson as a methodical, tidy woman who would have washed up immediately after a meal.

From these and other enquiries, the time of death could be fixed at about nine o'clock on Saturday morning.

The search of the house was continued and the detectives found what the murderer had failed to find—a collection of coins, some of them gold £5 pieces, in a work-box under a china crucifix. Behind the mirror in the dining-room was a collection of visiting cards, discoloured with age, and the names and addresses on these were checked. The name of the murderer might be among them.

So far the police had absolutely no clue to the identity of the murderer, though it had been possible to build up an accurate picture of the dead widow's life and habits. It had also been ascertained that she had inherited several properties on the death of her husband ten years before.

Anyone well acquainted with her might know that, and might expect that there would be a large sum of money from rents in the house. Did that explain the knife wound in the throat? Had the murderer feared that she might recover from the blows on the head and name someone whom she recognized as her assailant?

One other item worthy of mention was found. It was a receipt for an electric vacuum cleaner.

Enquiries in the neighbourhood were without result. No one, apparently, had seen man or woman leave Mrs. Kempson's house. Chief Inspector Horwell requested the Chief Constable of Oxford for the use of police officers in plain clothes, and the men called at every house within a radius of a quarter of a mile. Still no tangible results. The enquiry was extended to a radius of half a mile, then to a radius of a mile.

From the very fringe of the mile radius came the first vital clue. The informant was another widow, and she had purchased a vacuum cleaner from a man named Seymour some two years before. After

purchase, Seymour had paid her three or four visits to make sure that the machine was working properly. Since then she had seen nothing of him until the previous Friday evening when, quite unexpectedly, he called.

He had a hard-luck tale to tell her of how he had been bathing outside the City and had all his money stolen. To prove his story he turned his pockets inside out. She lent him 4s. 6d.

At ten-thirty the same evening Seymour again called to say he had missed the last bus and was stranded. He was provided with a meal and a bed for the night in the spare room. The next morning the lady noticed a new hammer and chisel, loosely wrapped in paper.

At eight o'clock on Saturday morning Seymour went out for a shave, returned to breakfast twenty minutes later, and finally left at about nine-thirty taking the hammer and chisel with him. From where he had stayed the night to Mrs. Kempson's house was a short walk.

On the following Thursday the lady received a letter of thanks from Seymour enclosing a 10s. note. It had been posted at Brighton.

Chief Inspector Horwell remembered the receipt for a vacuum cleaner found in Mrs. Kempson's house. At last he had a definite line of enquiry. Police officers were sent to every ironmonger's shop within a wide radius, and at one, quite close to both houses, the assistant remembered serving a man with a hammer and chisel just before closing time on Friday night.

Now another lady came forward to say she had seen Seymour at a bus-stop at eleven o'clock on the morning of the crime. She, too, had purchased a cleaner from him two years previously. At the bus-stop he was nervous and strange in his manner, and she was glad to part company.

The Chief Inspector made a report to the Yard with a request for any information the Criminal Record Office might have about a man answering to the description of Seymour.

Never was the value of the C.R.O. better illustrated. It knew Seymour well. It knew, among other things, that a year to the day before the murder Seymour had been charged with assaulting a woman and had been bound over on condition that he paid her ten pounds compensation within a year. The money had not been paid. And that was by no means the only entry in Seymour's record.

The finger of suspicion now definitely pointed at Seymour, but there was still no scrap of *proof* that he was a murderer.

Chief Inspector Horwell had, however, more to work on than the public might realize. On Friday Seymour was penniless and borrowed 4s. 6d. That evening he spent 4s. on the tools, and the following morning he spent 6d. on a shave. At midday on Saturday he visited a public house some miles from Oxford and bought two drinks.

From Aylesbury came still more significant information. A man resembling Seymour had stayed there on the night of 31st July and left

without paying his bill. In order, probably, to get away unsuspected, he left his suitcase in his bedroom. On the afternoon of the murder the landlord discovered this man in the room. When challenged he said he wanted his shaving kit and would return later and settle his account. The landlord refused to part with the case and its contents and the man never returned.

The police took possession of the suitcase and found in it among the clothes a hammer. To all appearances it was identical with the hammer sold to Seymour in Oxford, but it lacked a maker's label on the handle. There was every indication that it had been well scrubbed and the label removed.

The hotel was carefully examined by Chief Inspector Horwell for anything that might positively identify the man as Seymour, and in the course of his investigations he found a green blotting-pad in the commercial room. Holding this up to a mirror he read a Brighton address and a name.

Seymour had written from Brighton to the woman who put him up at Oxford.

And now came the clue that was eventually to lead Seymour to the gallows. At the bottom of the suitcase were what Inspector Horwell at first took to be bread-crumbs. He examined them closely and finally soaked them in water. The 'crumbs' unrolled and proved to be pieces of the label from the hammer.

Evidently Seymour had returned to the hotel, not to collect his shaving-kit, but to remove the tell-tale label from the hammer. Unconsciously he must have scraped it off over the open suit-case.

The Chief Inspector had already taken a long shot which could do no harm and which might yield results. He had communicated with the Chief Constable of Brighton and given him the Brighton address from the blotting-paper together with a description of Seymour.

The Brighton Police found Seymour—he denied his identity—at that address and detained him.

The murderer was caught, but there was still no case to go before a jury. Indeed, it was not yet certain that Seymour was a murderer. In spite of his record and his presence at the time in Oxford, he might have been the victim of coincidence.

Step by step the evidence was collected. Seymour, penniless in Oxford, had travelled to Brighton, had paid his landlady £2 2s. 6d. and purchased provisions, had put up an alibi by quoting addresses where he had called at the vital time which proved to be entirely false.

After a trial lasting a week Seymour was found guilty and condemned to death. His subsequent appeal was dismissed.

He was convicted entirely on circumstantial evidence—evidence that can neither lie nor forget nor break down under cross-examination.

THE MURDER OF VIVIAN MESSITER

In September of 1928 Mr. Vivian Messiter, a single man, took up his duties at Southampton as representative for a firm of lubricating oil manufacturers. At first he was industrious in his work, but his company received no further orders from him—nor, indeed, any communications at all—after 29th October.

At the New Year the company appointed a new agent, a Mr. Passmore, who took over on 10th January and immediately went round to the company's premises at 42 Grove Street to take possession. He found the store locked and had to obtain assistance to force the padlock.

Passmore, who had a companion with him, found first a car loaded with five drums of oil. Exploring behind a stack of oil drums they came across the body of a man with ghastly head injuries. It was clearly no case of suicide, for there was no weapon, nor could the dead man have locked himself in *from the outside*.

The body was identified as that of Vivian Messiter, and the late Sir Bernard Spilsbury, Honorary Pathologist to the Home Office, established that death was due to savage blows from a blunt instrument and not, as had at first been supposed, to a wound from an expanding bullet.

The Chief Constable of Southampton, realizing that a long time had elapsed since the murder, called in the aid of Scotland Yard. Chief Inspector Prothero and Detective Sergeant Young were immediately despatched and joined forces with Detective Inspector Chatfield of the Southampton Police.

Messiter appeared to have no friends and few acquaintances, yet the detectives solved the mystery in a remarkably short time.

The first real clues were a memorandum book and a duplicate order book found in the car. In the memorandum book was a receipt for 2s. 6d. paid as commission and signed by 'H. F. Galton' on 30th October, 1938, the day on which Messiter had disappeared from his lodgings. Galton was easily traced and able to prove quite conclusively that the record was of a straightforward transaction in which he had secured a customer for Messiter and received commission. He said, however, that he had been paid on 29th October and that 30th October was the date on which the oil was to be delivered.

Both books were again examined and it was then found that leaves had been removed. In the duplicate order book were two carbon sheets. The carbons were subjected to scientific examination and revealed records of commission transactions for oil by 'W. F. T.', who had been paid various sums of money. The police set out to trace the purchasers of the oil and found that *every name and address was false*.

The pattern of the crime was now beginning to appear in vague outline, just as the image begins to develop on a photographic negative.

Every inch of the garage was examined and the search was rewarded by the discovery of two scraps of paper. One was so stained with oil and dirt that nothing could be read on it: it was sent away for expert examination. The other, clean but screwed up, proved to be a note from Messiter to someone named W. F. Thomas stating the hours at which he would be at the store.

The name corresponded to the initials that the police had already found in the book.

There was found also a bloodstained hammer which had been borrowed from a mechanic.

When the soiled scrap had been cleaned it was found also to bear the name of Thomas. At Messiter's lodgings was found correspondence that seemed to show he had engaged a man named Thomas to work on commission during October, 1928.

Now Chief Inspector Prothero was able to utilize the vast resources of the police. From the Wiltshire Constabulary he learnt that a man named Thomas was wanted in connection with the theft of £143 from a Mr. Mitchell of Downton, who had employed him as a motor mechanic.

Mr. Mitchell, when interviewed, described how Thomas had answered an advertisement, had been interviewed at Southampton on 27th October, and had been engaged to start work at Downton on 5th November.

But Thomas, he added, had turned up on 30th October and offered to start work at once. This was not convenient, and Thomas departed by car only to return on 3rd November by taxicab with a young woman presumed to be his wife. He borrowed the money to pay the driver from a clerk employed by Mr. Mitchell.

During the third week in December the £143 disappeared. So also did Thomas while the Wiltshire Police were enquiring into the loss of the money. He had given them a fictitious name and address of his previous employer in Southampton.

The detectives then made a most significant discovery. Behind the stove in Thomas's lodgings was found yet another scrap of paper bearing the words 'Podmore' and 'Manchester'.

Manchester Police knew quite a lot about 'Podmore'. He was a motor mechanic wanted there for fraudulent conversion.

There was now good reason to suppose 'Thomas' and 'Podmore' were one and the same individual.

It was possible to circulate a full description of both Thomas and the woman who was associating with him. The Stoke-on-Trent police knew them both. At least the description of Thomas tallied with that of William Henry Podmore, a well-known thief, while that of the woman resembled 'Golden-haired Lil', a woman known to have consorted with him.

The Hanley Police found 'Lil' at her home one week after the discovery of Messiter's body. She declared that Podmore had gone to Southampton in answer to the police appeal. He was arrested shortly after, but the charge of murder was not preferred against him for some

considerable time. He was taken to Manchester, tried there on fraudulent conversion charges, and received two consecutive sentences of three months each. On his discharge he was re-arrested, taken to Salisbury and charged with the theft of £143 at Downton. On a plea of prejudice the hearing was transferred to the Old Bailey. He pleaded guilty and served a sentence of six months in Wandsworth Prison. He was released in December, 1929, re-arrested and brought before the magistrates at Southampton. By a majority verdict he was committed for trial on a charge of murder.

The trial did not open until 3rd March, 1930, owing to the General Election, although the case for the Crown had been ready for many months. He was the victim of one of the longest delays known to English justice—a delay the more regrettable because the work of the detectives had been astonishing in its speed and accuracy. Probably never before had a Yard man reached a conclusion and effected an arrest so quickly on so stale a scent, for the crime was committed on 30th October and the body lay undiscovered until 10th January of the following year.

The trial before the then Lord Chief Justice, Lord Hewart of Bury, lasted a week. Podmore was found guilty and sentenced to death. An application for leave to appeal to the House of Lords was refused by the Attorney-General, and the Labour Home Secretary, Mr. J. R. Clynes, declined to act on a petition for a reprieve. There was, he said, no scintilla of doubt as to Podmore's guilt.

Podmore was hanged at Winchester on 22nd April, 1930.

Nor do those concerned with the case doubt his guilt and, in fact, that appeal was chiefly based on the question of the admissibility of the pieces of paper found in the garage as evidence.

Podmore was a man with a bad record; it was proved he had borrowed the hammer for which he could have no lawful use; there is no doubt that he planned the crime carefully and executed it with savage brutality.

The case remains an outstanding example of detection, both individual and collective.



FOX THE MATRICIDE

At the end of October, 1929, an inquest was held in Margate on Mrs. Rosaline Fox, a widow who was found dead in her room in a Margate hotel. The room was full of smoke and an arm-chair near the gas-fire was burning.

Medical evidence was given that the cause of death was shock and suffocation. The woman, it was believed, had woken up, found the

room full of smoke and tried to get up, but was overcome by shock and suffocated.

The Coroner returned a verdict of Death by Misadventure, and great sympathy was extended to the son, Charles Sidney Fox, who had been staying at the hotel with his mother and who had been the first to enter the smoke-filled room.

On 25th October the body of Mrs. Fox was buried in her native village of Great Fransham in the county of Norfolk.

The tragic occurrence had its brief paragraph in the daily papers and passed into oblivion.

Charles Sidney Fox instructed his lawyers to collect money due from insurance on his mother's life. The total of these policies was the not inconsiderable sum of £3,010, and it was due from companies in sums of £10, £1,000, and £2,000. The £10 was paid without question, but the circumstances of the other two policies were unusual. They were short-term policies available to travellers and purchasers of diaries at a premium of a few shillings. The £1,000 policy was for one day only, and both policies were due to expire at midnight on 23rd October.

Mrs. Fox expired some twenty minutes earlier.

Each company felt justified in making further enquiries before paying the claims, and accordingly the matter was placed in the hands of the Margate Police.

Enquiries were at once begun and the results were illuminating. Fox and his mother were not the people of wealth they had represented themselves to be. Their joint legitimate income was, in fact, 18s. a week. Fox had served several prison sentences for various forms of fraud, and both he and his mother had been staying at South Coast hotels which they had left without meeting the bills. In some cases Fox had paid with worthless cheques. It was, therefore, possible to charge him with obtaining money and credit by false pretences.

He was arrested on 3rd November at Norwich.

Margate Police sought the help of Scotland Yard, and Chief Inspector Hambrook took charge of the case.

With the help of the Margate Police a very large number of statements was taken, and on 9th November Chief Inspector Hambrook went with Sir Bernard Spilsbury to Great Fransham for the exhumation of the body.

Sir Bernard's report gave the police their first real grip on the case. He found that there were no traces of suffocation, since the air passages were free from soot and there were no traces of carbon monoxide in the blood.

In other words, *Mrs. Fox had ceased to breathe before the smoke reached her.*

Armed with this information, Chief Inspector Hambrook had little difficulty in building up his case. Fox had needed money, he was a known criminal, the policies on his mother's life were valueless if she remained

alive after midnight on 23rd October. Still more damning were the facts that Fox occupied a bedroom with a door communicating with his mother's room, he had been the last person to see her alive, he had been the first to discover the fire.

Chief Inspector Hambrook was now convinced he had to deal with murder. With the help of the Chief Officer of the Margate fire brigade he carried out many tests of the bedroom occupied by Mrs. Fox.

At the inquest it had been assumed that Mrs. Fox had left a newspaper near the fire and this had ignited, the flames reaching the arm-chair. After the experiments had shown this to be almost impossible without danger to the carpet (which was undamaged), they came to the conclusion that the fire had been started under the chair.

The case was strengthened by Sir Bernard Spilsbury's report in which the cause of death was given as manual strangulation.

The very precautions Fox had taken to avoid detection helped to condemn him, for he had told a waiter—and it could only be for the purpose of explaining away any marks on the body—that he had been having a mock fight with his mother and had pretended to strangle her.

After a long hearing before the Margate magistrates, Fox was committed for trial at the Sussex Assizes.

Every item of medical evidence for the prosecution was contested by experts for the defence, but the jury found him guilty. He had, according to his own story, found his mother's room full of smoke—and he had closed the door behind him when he went for help.

He was hanged at Maidstone on 8th April, 1930, having had the distinction of being co-respondent in a divorce action after his conviction.

CHAPTER X

THE MURDER BAG (*concluded*)

THE CASE OF CRIPPEN

ON 22nd November, 1910, there was hanged in Pentonville Prison, London, a little American doctor, Hawley Harvey Crippen.

He had been found guilty of the murder of his wife after a trial that had roused the interest of the public to an extent almost unprecedented.

Crippen was born in Cold Water, Michigan, in 1862, and qualified as a Doctor of Medicine at Cleveland. In 1883 he paid his first visit to England and attended various hospitals to improve his medical knowledge. He returned to America and after some years as an assistant he took degrees in eye and ear work at the New York Ophthalmic Hospital. He moved to San Diego taking with him his first wife, Miss Charlotte Bell, of New York.

His next move was to Salt Lake City where his wife died in 1890. He returned to New York as assistant to Dr. Jeffery of Brooklyn, and three years later he met, as a patient, a seventeen-year-old girl who called herself Cora Turner. Crippen was fascinated by the girl, and when she told him that a man under whose protection she was living had asked her to go away with him, he proposed marriage at once. The wedding took place at Jersey City a few days later. Her real name, he learnt, was Mackamotzi, and she was a Russian Pole.

After various appointments in America Crippen came with his wife to England as manager of the Munyon Company's Shaftesbury Avenue branch in London. He returned to America without his wife, but came back to England within a year. This time he had no appointment, but he soon accepted another offer from Munyon's as manager in their Oxford Street branch.

Domestically his last visit to America proved disastrous: it was the prelude to the grim drama that ended at eight o'clock one morning in Pentonville Prison.

Absence had not made the heart of Cora Crippen grow fonder. She had taken advantage of her husband's visit to America to lead the sort of life she had always desired. At least she managed to penetrate the fringes of that life. She had been trained for grand opera, but the best she could achieve was a few engagements at smoking concerts. She did, however, considerably enlarge her circle of acquaintances; she had, when she chose, an undeniable attraction for both sexes, and

she was elected a member of the Music Hall Ladies' Guild. Among her friends was Bruce Miller, an American music hall artist; and Miller, she told her husband, had been a frequent visitor to the house. Whether any serious affair had developed between the two, or whether Mrs. Crippen—she preferred to be known as Belle Elmore, her professional name—merely wished to stir him to a gayer life and a more generous allowance one can only conjecture. In 1905 the Crippens moved to Hildrop Crescent, Camden Town, where Belle Elmore entertained lavishly—far too lavishly for Crippen's quiet tastes and small purse.

At Crippen's office there worked a shorthand typist, Ethel le Neve, whose modest and unsophisticated charms offered the doctor a restfulness that was so sadly lacking at home.

Such the background.

On 31st January of 1910 Mr. and Mrs. Martinetti dined with the Crippens as was their weekly custom. Martinetti complained of feeling unwell during the evening, and on the following morning Crippen called at their house to ask after him. Later that day Miss Le Neve delivered a note to the secretary of the Music Hall Ladies' Guild from Belle Elmore announcing her resignation as treasurer, as she had to make a hurried visit to America.

On 12th March Miss Le Neve resigned her post at Munyon's and went to live at Hildrop Crescent with Crippen, and at Easter the pair went to Dieppe for a holiday.

On 24th March Crippen sent the Martinettis a telegram announcing the death of his wife and in the following issue of the *Era* her obituary notice appeared.

The friends of Belle Elmore were not satisfied about her visit to America. It was unlike her to go, even in urgent circumstances, without communicating with them, and questions were put to Crippen, chiefly by Mr. Nash. On 30th June Nash went to Scotland Yard where he saw Chief Inspector Walter Dew. A week later Dew called with Detective Sergeant Mitchell at Hildrop Crescent where they saw Miss Le Neve who took them to Crippen's surgery.

Crippen, with apparent frankness, admitted that the story of Belle Elmore's death in California was false. He alleged that she had eloped with Bruce Miller and that he had circulated news of her death to prevent scandal. The two detectives accompanied him back to his house and made a superficial search, apparently accepting this new story. A theatrical basket, Crippen said, was missing and with it many of his wife's clothes. Inspector Dew advised Crippen to advertise for information of her whereabouts in the American papers, and the Yard circularized Belle Elmore as a missing person.

On 11th July Inspector Dew called again at Crippen's surgery (he was now in partnership with a Dr. Roylance as a dental surgeon) and he learnt that Crippen had failed to appear. There he heard an

interesting story from William Long, the dental mechanic. Two days previously, said Long, Crippen had asked him to make some purchases. These formed a complete outfit for a lad of sixteen from shoes to hat. Long made the purchases and handed them to Crippen in two parcels. The doctor made no comment and he had not seen him since.

Dew at once went to Hildrop Crescent but found the house unoccupied. He was now convinced that more lay behind the disappearance of Belle Elmore than Crippen had told him, and circulated a description of both the doctor and Miss Le Neve, who had also disappeared.

A thorough search was now made of the house at Hildrop Crescent, where Dew and his assistants found that bricks in the cellar floor were loose. They were removed and digging began. Not far below the surface human remains were found. They were partly decomposed and it was not at first even possible to tell the sex, but a hair-curler containing a few human hairs gave presumptive evidence that they belonged to a woman.

Dew now believed he had the answer to the riddle and lost no time in trying to trace the missing couple. For the first time wireless was used to help the police, and messages were sent to all ships at sea that were equipped with it. The message was picked up by the *Montrose*, bound from Antwerp to Montreal. Captain Kendall wirelessly back that he was already suspicious that the 'son' of a self-styled Canadian merchant was not a man since he had observed endearments pass between the two, and now he was convinced that the 'Robinsons' were Crippen and Miss Le Neve.

A most amazing position followed. Owing to the use of the wireless, the whole world knew through the newspapers that Crippen and Miss Le Neve were aboard the *Montrose*—*except the passengers on the Montrose*. Crippen, too, was ignorant that he had been discovered.

Inspector Dew immediately sailed on the fast liner, *Laurentic*, which was due to reach Canada before the *Montrose*.

In the meantime the world's Press published daily bulletins. Crippen was resting in his cabin; his 'son' was unwell and could not mix with the other passengers (the story Crippen told was that the son had had a breakdown from studying too hard for an examination); Crippen had attended a ship's concert; he was quiet and looked extremely worried.

As Dew raced across the Atlantic, the Home Office and Scotland Yard experts got to work on the remains. Doctors Marshall (the Divisional Police Surgeon), Pepper, Spilsbury, Willcox, and Luff between them carried out a searching analysis and came to the conclusion that the remains were those of a female who had at some time had an abdominal operation, and that she had died from hyoscin hydrobromide poisoning.



(Illustrated)

The Road-hog's nightmare?—Recruits learning to report an accident



(Sport and General)

Preparing for the Crowds—Police horses trained with rattles and 'teasers'

So it was now evident that a woman had died from poisoning, and from the fact of dismembering and burial in the cellar it was extremely improbable that she had taken her own life! The police were, in fact, sure beyond all reasonable doubt that the remains were those of Belle Elmore, but they lacked proof.

There were certain valuable clues, and on these the police worked. Dew had found in Crippen's room two complete sets of pyjamas and the trousers of a third pair. A jacket which matched these was found wrapped round the remains. All the pyjamas were certified by the makers as being a pattern not sold before 1908. Mrs. Martinetti recollected seeing that Belle Elmore had an abdominal scar, and Mrs. Harrison, another old friend, stated that the dyed hairs found in the curler were identical with Belle Elmore's hair.

Still more significant was the fact that Crippen had purchased from a chemist five grains of hyoscin hydrobromide on 18th January.

Dew disembarked from the *Laurentic* at Farther Point, embarked on the *Montrose* when it stopped to pick up the pilot, and instructed Canadian detectives to arrest the pair just before they landed at Montreal. By the time he had brought them back to England the case was nearly ready for trial.

Crippen throughout his trial protested his innocence, but the circumstantial evidence was overwhelming. He could produce no evidence of having prescribed hyoscin hydrobromide for any patient, yet he had purchased sufficient for 50,000 medical prescriptions. He declared that the body must have been buried before he occupied the house, but the police were able to show that the pyjama jacket wrapped round the remains could not have been purchased before 1908, and Crippen had moved to Hilldrop Crescent in 1905. As for motive, Crippen's movements after he had announced the death of his wife seemed to supply the answer.

The evidence convinced the jury of his guilt, even though the identity of the body was hotly contested by the defence.

Even after his conviction and the dismissal of his appeal reports were received that Belle Elmore had been seen alive in various parts of the world.

Did Crippen leave a confession? It was stated some years after his execution that he did, but there is no doubt that the verdict was just.

He made, apparently, an attempt to cheat the gallows by suicide while in the condemned cell. He was required at night to hand over his spectacles to a prison officer and on one occasion an arm was found to have been broken off. This had been secreted in his bed and was presumably intended to be used for opening an artery.

Miss Le Neve was found not guilty either of murder or of being an accessory after the fact. She was discharged.



THE 'CLEFT CHIN' MURDER

He lay in a ditch at Staines, some nineteen miles west of London. He was dead, and from the wounds on his body and the way in which he lay it was soon evident that he had been murdered.

There was ink on his fingers and the centre of his chin was deeply hollowed. The 'Cleft Chin' murder was the title given by the Press.

The body was discovered by a fireman returning home from night duty on the morning of 7th October, 1944.

"I thought he had been taken ill," said the fireman. "I shook him and he did not respond. I realized he was dead."

The police were quickly summoned, and before long they had identified the man as George Heath, aged thirty-four, the driver of a private-hire car.

Sordid and simple as this murder was in its details, it attracted great attention on both sides of the Atlantic, for one of the two persons accused of the crime was an American soldier.

Under the United States of America (Visiting Forces) Act, 1942, it had been agreed that offenders against English law who were members of the American Forces should be handed over for trial by their own authorities.

In this case the United States Government waived its rights and requested that the accused man should be tried by a British Court.

The police wasted no time in finding material witnesses. A night watchman at a Chiswick factory told them that at two-thirty on the morning of 7th October he heard the sound of a shot—"like a heavy-calibre revolver shot fired in a confined space," he said.

An electrician's apprentice picked up a wallet on the Great West Road at eight o'clock that morning. It contained a driving licence, an identity card, and a cheque-book. These were the property of George Heath, and he handed them over to the police.

Divisional Detective Inspector Tarr and Inspector Tansill, who were handling the case, now felt that it was beginning to crack.

From a garage proprietor they learnt that Heath had been driving a Ford V8 car, with the index number RD8955. Number and description of the car were circulated to all parts of England.

Two days later a police constable saw the car drawn up outside a house in South-West London. He rang up his police-station and within a few minutes a police car was drawn up ready to flash its lights on the vehicle. For nearly an hour the officers waited: then a figure clad in the uniform of a United States Army Officer came out of a house and got in the driving-seat.

"Is this your car, sir?" asked a police officer before he could drive away.

The man made no answer.

Shouting for assistance the policeman caught hold of him. The lights of the police car flashed up, members of the crew dashed forward and dragged the occupant from his seat and held him against a wall while he was searched.

They found in his hip-pocket a loaded automatic, cocked and with the safety-catch released.

While the man was being taken to Hammersmith Police Station, where he gave the name of Second Lieutenant Richard John Allen, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment, experts were already examining the car the murdered man had been driving. They found dents inside the car which had not been there when it was hired to Heath. The dents, they concluded, were made by bullets which had passed through Heath's body after being fired from the back.

Since there seemed a *prima facie* case against the man who called himself Allen, and since he appeared to be an American Army officer, the police communicated with the American military authorities. Lieutenant De Mott, of the 8th Military Police Criminal Investigation Section of the U.S. Army, was sent to interview him. In the presence of Inspector Tarr and Inspector Tansill, Lieutenant De Mott cautioned the prisoner according to the American formula.

"It is your privilege to remain silent. You need make no statement to me whatsoever: anything you do choose to say may be used either for or against you in the event that this investigation results in a trial. Do you thoroughly understand your rights?"

"Yes," said the prisoner.

This caution is substantially the same as the formula used by the English Police. What followed differs materially from English practice, for under *Judges' Rules*¹ a prisoner making a voluntary statement must not be cross-examined, and the only questions that may be put are those necessary to clear up any ambiguity. Unless these Rules are observed, the statement may well be ruled out of evidence at the trial.

But American investigations are bound by no such rules, and, accordingly, Lieutenant De Mott proceeded to put question after question to the prisoner.

It was not long before the truth—or some of it—began to emerge.

¹ See chapter on 'The Case for the Crown'.

'Second Lieutenant Allen' was, in fact, Private Karl Gustav Hulten, and he had been absent without leave from his regiment for several weeks. The pistol found in his possession he admitted stealing.

The truth did not at first emerge in regard to the car, for Hulten declared he had found it abandoned in Berkshire where he had spent the night of 6th-7th October.

Hulten was removed to American C.I.D. Headquarters and again questioned by Lieutenant De Mott. This time he said he had stolen the car from a London car-park, and that he had spent the night with a girl whom he knew as Georgina Grayson.

The following morning Hulten agreed to point out the house where he alleged he had stayed.

This was a matter for the English Police. Hulten was taken to Hammersmith Police Station and from there he accompanied Inspectors Tarr and Tansill to King Street, Hammersmith. The two inspectors went in and found a young woman in bed.

"Do you know an American officer?" asked Inspector Tarr.

"You mean 'Ricky' Allen, do you?" said the girl.

"Yes. Will you tell me what nights he has stayed with you here?"

Her answer covered the fatal night.

The girl dressed and accompanied the two officers to the police-station, where she made a statement. Her real name, she said, was Elizabeth Marina Jones, and she was a strip-tease artist, living apart from her husband. She was eighteen and a half years old.

The statement said nothing to connect her with the crime and she was allowed to go. That same day she met a War Reserve Constable, Kimberley, whom she happened to know, and in the course of conversation she told him she had spent four hours at the police-station in connection with the murder. "I know the fellow they have got inside," she said, "but he could have nothing to do with the murder as he was with me all Friday night."

Kimberley remarked how tired she was looking and the girl made a reply that helped materially to place her and Hulten before Judge and Jury.

"If you had seen someone do what I saw done, you would not be able to sleep at night."

Kimberley knew his duty. He got in touch at once with Inspector Tansill.

Interviewed again, Elizabeth Jones told a very different story.

Then she said:

"I first met him on Tuesday, 3rd October, 1944, in a café in Hammersmith Broadway, and I was introduced to him by Lenny, I don't know his last name. He asked me to meet him at 11.30 p.m. that night to go for a drive. The meeting-place was outside the Broadway Cinema. I

turned up and he was not there. I was on my way home to King Street, Hammersmith, when I was hailed by a man driving an American lorry. I recognized the voice as being that of Ricky, and I got into the truck with him. It was a big truck and had ten wheels. We drove on into Reading. I told him in the truck that I would like to do something dangerous, meaning to go over Germany in a bomber. I meant that, but he got me wrong. He showed me a gun which he pulled out from an inside pocket; or it might have been hooked to his trousers. When we got to Reading he drove around the town and we started back towards London at about two o'clock, I think. It was a left-hand drive, and during the night he taught me to drive.

"We got back into London at five o'clock in the morning and I left him and went indoors. He drove me in the truck to my door, and I don't know where he went. He knew my name as Georgina Grayson, my stage name, and I gave him my address before I went. He called for me at my flat at about five in the afternoon last Thursday, and we went and ate and afterwards went to the Gaumont Cinema in Hammersmith. We came out of the cinema at about 8.30 and entered a café in Hammersmith Broadway. Just as we got to the door the sirens sounded. He took me round to the Gaumont car-park, where I saw the American ten-wheel truck. We got into the truck which Ricky drove to Reading. We stopped in bed until ten to three on Friday afternoon and got up. He then gave me a railway cloak-room ticket and he asked me to go to Hammersmith Metropolitan Station to get the valise. I did as he asked me and brought back the valise. He went out about 4.30 p.m. and promised to call for me at about six o'clock. He didn't come and I stayed in. About 11.30 p.m. I heard a whistle coming from the street outside, and I went down to the street door because I recognized it was Ricky's whistle. This was an arrangement we had made previously. He came indoors and then said: 'Come on; let's go and get a taxi.' I knew the meaning behind his words, and that he wanted me to go with him to rob a taxi-cab driver.

"We walked along Hammersmith Road and stood in a shop doorway opposite Cadby Hall. After about ten minutes a grey Ford car approached us very slowly like a taxi-cab; it was coming from the direction of Hammersmith Broadway. I yelled, 'Taxi', and it stopped. Ricky thought it was a naval car, and Ricky stopped in the shop doorway while I went over to speak to the driver. I said, 'Are you a taxi?' and he said, 'Private hire. Where do you want to go?' I replied, 'Wait a minute,' and went back to Ricky. I told him it was a private car, and he asked how many men were in it. I told him only the driver, so we went across to the car and Ricky asked the driver to take us to the top of King Street.

"I know now that the driver was named George Heath, for reasons I will tell you later. He told Ricky that the fare would be ten shillings, and Ricky said, 'That's all right.' I know that Ricky had nineteen

shillings in his pocket and I had ten shillings and threepence. We got into the car and drove down King Street. After a while Heath said, 'We've passed King Street; where do you want to go?' Ricky said, 'It's farther on; I don't mind paying more.' Heath seemed cross, but drove on, and when we came to a roundabout, Heath said, 'This is the Great West Road.'

"Ricky and I were sitting in the back seat of the saloon car, and as we got into the Great West Road, Ricky told Heath to drive slowly, and when we had travelled about three hundred yards before reaching a bridge, Ricky said to Heath, 'We'll get out here,' and Heath stopped. Just as we were passing the roundabout I heard a click and saw that Ricky had his automatic in his right hand. I realized that Ricky was going to frighten the driver with the gun and take his money, because we had passed my house on the way.

"Heath leaned over from his seat towards the middle of the car with the obvious intention of opening the near-side back door for me to get out. Ricky was sitting to my right, and as Heath was leaning over I saw a flash and heard a bang. I was surprised that there was not a loud bang, because Ricky had told me it would make a big noise when it went off. I was deafened in my right ear by the bang. Heath moaned slightly and turned a little towards his front. Ricky said to him, 'Move over, or I'll give you another dose of the same.' I saw that he still had the automatic in his hand. Heath seemed to understand what Ricky said, because he moved farther over to the left-hand side of the front seat until his shoulder was almost touching the near-side door. I heard him breathing very heavily, and his head slumped on to his chest. The next I realized was that Ricky was in the driving-seat and the car was moving.

"As we went over the bridge near by, Ricky told me to tear down the back window-blind to see if anyone was following us. I tore the right corner down, looked out and told Ricky no one was following. Ricky then told me to go through Heath's pockets. I leaned over and I heard his breath coming in short gasps. Ricky told me to look for his wallet in the breast-pocket of his jacket. I felt in that pocket but did not find the wallet. I found it instead in the left-hand outside pocket of his overcoat. It was a small folding wallet with a photograph inside and four one-pound notes in it. I put the wallet on the back seat. Then I removed papers and a white book from his pockets. Among these were his identity card, from which I learned his name and address, a cheque-book with a blue cover, a driving licence, a blue card, some petrol coupons, and some photographs and letters. I also put this stuff on the seat by my side.

"From his trouser pocket I took a pound in silver and a few pennies, which I put into my pocket. From other pockets I took a big brown fountain-pen, a silver pencil, a long silver cigarette-case which had a funny sliding action to open—it had '119 Regent Street, W.1' printed

on the bottom inside—and an expensive-looking cigarette-lighter with a snap-down action. I put all these things in my pocket.

“Ricky then asked me if Heath had a watch, and I found a wrist-watch on Heath’s left wrist and I gave it to Ricky. I think I took everything from his pockets. All this time Ricky was driving fast along the road, and I sat back examining the things I had taken from Heath’s pockets. Ricky told me to put all the valuable things which I thought he would want to keep in my pockets and put the other stuff on the back seat. I did this, and he then told me to look on the floor of the car with a torch for the bullet. I did this but did not find the bullet.

“Ricky drove on until he turned off the main road on to a sort of common. He drove on to the grass and stopped two or three yards from a ditch. He got out and dragged Heath’s body from the car and rolled it into the ditch. He said there was blood on his hands and I gave him Heath’s handkerchief to wipe it off. He then told me to pick up the papers and get into the front seat quickly. He told me to be careful of finger-prints at the same time.

“He turned the car right round and drove over the grass and eventually on to the road again. When the car went over the grass it was very bumpy. After we got off the grass he told me to look for the bullet again with the aid of Heath’s torch. I found a bronze-coloured bullet on the floor by the near-side door and gave it to Ricky. After I found the bullet Ricky told me to take over the wheel and said he wanted to look at the things I had taken from Heath’s pockets. I drove along and I noticed that there was no window in the off-side door of the car near the driving-seat. As I drove, Ricky was examining the things from Heath’s pockets, and he threw the wallet and papers out of the window as we went along. He threw the bullet away as we were going along a wide road which had something in to separate the traffic going in opposite directions.

“Just before we got to the roundabout near where Ricky shot Heath I asked him where we had dumped the body, and he said, ‘Staines’. Just before we got to the roundabout Ricky took the wheel and drove the car into the old Gaumont car-park behind Hammersmith Broadway. We then went to the —— Café in Hammersmith Broadway and had something to eat. It was then about a quarter to four. There were quite a number of cab-drivers in there, and I asked Ricky to ask one of them to drive us home, but none of them would. I should say that when we put the car in the car-park we wiped everything inside and outside the car with our handkerchiefs.

“After leaving the car we walked home. When we got indoors I said, ‘He’s dead, isn’t he?’ and he said, ‘Yes.’ I said, ‘That’s cold-blooded murder then; how could you do it?’ and he said, ‘People in my profession haven’t the time to think what they do.’ Indoors we examined all of Heath’s things we had taken. Then we went to bed.”

Without difficulty the police built up a strong case against both Hulten and Jones, for under English Law Jones was equally guilty of murder if she was engaged as a free agent with Hulten in committing a felony involving violence which resulted in the slaying of an innocent party.¹

Both pleaded not guilty.

At the outset Hulten's counsel made a strong effort to have the statements which Hulten made to Lieutenant De Mott declared inadmissible, since the method by which they were taken did not conform with Judges' Rules.

The Judge, Mr. Justice Charles, after hearing argument and evidence in the absence of the jury, decided that the statements could be admitted. He was satisfied that they were entirely voluntary and that Hulten was at no time tired or deprived of food or rest.

Two people alone witnessed the brutal slaying of Heath—the two prisoners. Yet so strong was the evidence of the statements, so exact the findings of the C.I.D. men, that the defence was overwhelmed. Hulten vainly strove to prove that the discharge of the weapon was an accident, but his own admission of callous indifference to the fate of a dying man was almost sufficient in itself to discount his plea.

Nor was the story told by Elizabeth Jones to a crowded court that she acted in fear any more plausible. Her partner in crime had declared that she expressed an ambition to do something dangerous to become—her own words—a gun moll. Independent witnesses said she showed no fear of Hulten.

The jury was absent for seventy-five minutes.

"Members of the jury," asked the Clerk of the Court at the Old Bailey, "are you agreed upon your verdict?"

"We are," answered the foreman.

"Do you find the prisoner Elizabeth Marina Jones guilty or not guilty of murder?"

"Guilty, with a recommendation to mercy."

"Do you find the prisoner Karl Gustav Hulten guilty or not guilty of murder?"

"Guilty."

The Judge passed sentence of death on each of the prisoners.

Jones, weeping and screaming, was removed to the cells. Hulten, with a show of stolid indifference, followed her.

The Judge waited until they had been removed, then he took an unusual course. "Members of the jury," he said, "I think you should know that those two people had been engaged on murderous or near-murderous assaults on other people."

Elizabeth Marina Jones had indeed gratified her ambition to become a gun moll, for the murder of Heath was not the first exploit of her

¹ See case of Brown and Kennedy, Chapter VIII.

six-day association with the twenty-three-year-old American Swedish-born soldier who claimed—without truth—to be a gangster from Chicago.

Her ambition led her to the very foot of the scaffold before a reprieve was granted.

In the case of Hulten no mitigating circumstances could be found. He was hanged according to the law.

During the preparation of the case against Hulten and Jones numerous experiments were made to discover exactly how the crime had been committed. In one a skeleton was placed in the driving-seat and shot with the revolver used in the murder.

THE SEVENTH CIRCLE

THE seventh circle of hell is surely reserved for those who pander to the most insidiously evil of all human failings, the craving for drugs.

These men and women, too astute to fall victims themselves, not only supply the market but create it. The troubled period of war and its immediate aftermath brings them golden opportunity for making fresh converts to their dreadful cult. Those whose nerves have been shattered, or whose lives have been broken by loss, are all too ready to seek temporary oblivion and ephemeral exhilaration by way of opium, cocaine, heroin, or hashish.

It is dangerously easy to conceal, for the quantity required for hundreds of doses is small, and bulk for bulk it is a thousand times more valuable to the racketeers who sell it than bootleg alcohol.

Sometimes the victim is induced to try it 'for a joke'; sometimes it is offered 'as a new cure for headache or depression, just on the market'. The fool who falls for the invitation quickly becomes a regular customer, for the first dose provides swift relief, followed by still deeper depression and a craving for more of the drug.

Once the habit is established it displaces all moral sense, and the addict will descend to any crime from theft and forgery to murder in order to obtain supplies. No one who has seen an addict suddenly deprived could be tempted to take the first fatal step.

The period after the 1914-1918 war saw the rise of dope kings in England. Strong measures by the police and port authorities have done much to check the traffic, but the sale of dope in England is now in some ways harder to control, since the heads of the rings no longer operate on English soil, and the capture of a few agents does not destroy the roots.

Most spectacular and dangerous of the English dope kings was the negro, Eddie Manning. Born in Jamaica (and therefore a British subject), Manning was 'educated' in the vice-dens of South America. He tried to start business on his own account in the Harlem district of New York, but found the opposition of the established racketeers too much for him. Somewhere about 1914 he honoured London with his presence, and after evading military service on medical grounds he moved to the West End and took various jobs as a musician in jazz bands which played in the less respectable clubs of Soho.

There was no shortage of such clubs. They had sprung up during the 1914-1918 war years to cater—at huge profits for their promoters—

for the craving for novelty excitement. It became fashionable to spend an evening in Soho and to drink inferior liquors during prohibited hours.

Manning quickly realized the opportunities for peddling dope among the clientèle, and even though he lacked capital he managed to make a start, chiefly by buying small quantities of cocaine and diluting it with boracic acid or Epsom salts.

Within six months he had built up a steady trade. A man was found dead from an overdose of heroin at Manning's flat in Lisson Street, and though at the time it could not be proved that the negro had supplied him, Manning was marked down by the Flying Squad. Observation was kept on premises he occupied in Greek Street, and women were seen to enter at all hours of the day and night. The Squad managed to arrest his associate, Carlo Meraldi, while in possession of thirteen packets of 'coke', but there was still no evidence against Manning. Finally he was caught and sentenced to three years' imprisonment for being in possession of an opium pipe and a large quantity of cocaine.

But his organization carried on even while he was in prison and conviction only made him more careful. After his release he made a point of never carrying drugs himself, but of employing women to do his work for him.

Manning, indeed, never dealt with men at all, either as agents or as victims. He had a fascination for women, and the number he ruined ran into hundreds. Tragic little Billie Carlton, the actress who died from an overdose of drugs, is said to have obtained her supplies through Manning.

At the height of his success he was a familiar figure in the West End. Immaculately dressed, he would greet women of his acquaintance with an old-world courtesy, ironical when one realizes what his association with them was. On one occasion while he was 'in the clear' he made an insulting remark to a passing detective. Against the law, but certainly not against justice, the detective knocked Eddie off his feet. There wasn't a detective in the Force who wouldn't gladly have sent the negro to the gallows.

In July of 1920 Manning was involved in a shooting affray in which he wounded three of his associates. His sentence for this was sixteen months' hard labour. Cocaine and cartridges were found at his flat. In spite of his promise to give up the dope trade, he opened the notorious Eddy's Bar under cover of which his activities went on. He received two more minor prison sentences, but continued to prosper with an ever-growing clientèle of women, some of them in the highest circles of fashion.

At last, over-confident, he disposed of two associates with whom he had quarrelled by betraying them to the police. He had broken the law of the underworld, and the underworld took its revenge. Manning had been indulging in the proceeds of thefts from motor-cars as a side-

line. In 1929 the police received information on which they acted promptly. Manning was arrested, charged and convicted of receiving stolen goods to the value of £3,085. Two-thirds of the property was recovered.

Manning died in Parkhurst Prison in February of 1931.

In a different category, but no less a menace to society, was Brilliant Chang. This gentleman left a wife and child in China to come to England to study engineering in 1913. He neglected his studies of engineering to study the night life of London, and white women had an irresistible fascination for him.

With Far East contacts already established for supplies, he set up opium dens in London and many other ports. His clientele was never in the same class as that of Manning, for he sold chiefly in dockland areas, and he sold to any who had the money to buy. He dealt in large quantities, wholesale as well as retail, and Manning probably derived his supplies from this source.

In 1917 Chang added cocaine to his stock, took a flat in Park Lane and opened a Chinese restaurant in Regent Street. He was suspected of supplying drugs to Freda Kempton, a dancing instructress who died of an overdose, and the scandal that followed ruined his restaurant, up till then a fashionable rendezvous.

Thereafter his fortunes declined. He left the fashionable West End for a mean apartment in Pennyfields, the Chinese quarter of London's dockland, and dealt with his clients through a hole in a rotten fence. In 1924 a woman was caught in possession of opium in Pennyfields, and when arrested she 'squealed' and led the detectives to Chang's hide-out. He was found in possession of opium and cocaine, and sentenced to fourteen months' hard labour and deportation.

The Recorder described him at his trial as a corrupter of womanhood. "Our girls must be protected and Society purged," he declared.

In April of 1925 Chang was deported. The only relic of his prosperous days that he took with him was a fur-lined coat.

Chang came back to Europe and tried to resume his old trade in Paris, but he was caught, deported again, and went blind in his own country.

Chang it was who ran some of the East End opium dens, haunts of romance according to many writers, and filthy garrets in reality. It is generally stated that the dens were located in cellars and basements, but in fact they were nearly all on the top floors or in attics so that the heavy fumes would not be detected from the street or doorway. These were no picturesque apartments with rich hangings and silken cushions, but floors often bare except for a thick covering of filth. Addicts find their luxury in dreams, not in surroundings.

Opium has to be 'cooked' before it is smoked. In its raw state smoking opium is a thick fluid like treacle. A needle is dipped in the fluid, then rotated over the flame from a lamp burning pea-nut oil. It turns to a

little round pill and is then dropped in the bowl of the pipe and lighted. Possession of opium pipes is now by law forbidden, and Chinese addicts exercise much ingenuity in making their own from gas piping, hollow brass rods, and any scrap of material they can lay hands on. Both the Yard and the Port of London Police have collections of captured pipes in their Black Museums.

Still more sinister than the purely commercial enterprise of Manning and Chang was the dope ring of which Miyakawa, the Jap, was English representative. In the light of future events one is tempted to wonder whether this ring was not part of Japan's fifth-column war against England and America. It was backed by a syndicate controlling an enormous capital and its transactions ran into millions.

Miyakawa played the part of a poverty-stricken outcast, but he was traced as owner of a consignment of drugs valued at a quarter of a million which the French Police captured at Marseilles. How he was finally run to earth is a secret of Scotland Yard, but he was rounded up and sent to Dartmoor.

Towards the close of the '30's a craze for smoking hashish (*cannabis indica*) spread round certain quarters of London, and when hashish became hard to obtain, the cruder South American plant, *marihuana*, became popular. It is easy to conceal and smoke in cigarettes, and its effects are even more dangerous than those of cocaine, heroin, and opium. Under its influence the whole personality changes and the most timid become imbued with reckless courage.

The conviction of Andrew (Saskatoon) Vanderberg came in April of 1938 as a salutary warning to addicts.

'Saskatoon' found in its potent fumes the courage to become a gunman, and in 1921 he received a life sentence for robbing a bank and shooting two policemen in America. Largely through petitions organized by his father he was released and came to England, where he joined the Army and started to make good. But friends in America sent him supplies of marihuana cigarettes. He deserted, indulged in several cases of robbery under arms, and finally 'shot it out' with Yard detectives. He was captured and sentenced to ten years' penal servitude.

Nearly all the dope rings have been intertwined with other forms of vice. Manning was the friend of every brothel-keeper in London and helped to provide them with material.

The White Slave trade still exists with its sinister two-way traffic. English girls—not all unwilling or in ignorance—find their way to Latin-America; foreign women are imported into England to walk London's streets.

In order to qualify as British subjects, these foreign women are smuggled across the Channel and promptly married to Englishmen. The husband receives a fee of from £10 to £20 and thereafter is not required: his wife is now an English subject. Even in the case of a marriage

that is bigamous it is difficult or impossible to obtain proof, as the couple do not live together and genuine names are not likely to be used.¹

There is, and always will be until the workings of the human mind are better understood, a section of the population whose tastes are abnormal. They are to be pitied rather than blamed, but one can extend no pity towards those who make a rich living, often coupled with subsequent blackmail, from such people. Fortunately the Yard has a well-organized squad to scavenge London of this refuse, and a box in the Black Museum bears evidence to the success of its efforts.

This 'Vice Squad' in the early months of 1947 started a big drive against all forms of vice in London following the death of a well-known doctor, and a united effort by Yard, Customs, and Port of London Authority Police is checking, if not stamping out, the source of foreign supplies.

The efforts of the squad were extended in April against the importation of foreign women, following the conviction of a gang of Maltese men convicted of demanding money with menaces from three women. It is well known that highly organized gangs not only import women, but instal them in flats rent-free and provide them with clothing in return for a large percentage of their earnings. Severe penalties are exacted from women who do not part with their percentage. Fifi Martin was murdered some few years ago after failing to comply with the orders of a gang.

Both men and women detectives are engaged in the drive, the ground-work of the latter being particularly effective in gathering the information necessary before making a raid.

¹ Legislation now seeks to curb this evil

THE SPECIAL BRANCH

THE Special Branch of the Metropolitan Police undertakes such onerous and responsible duties as keeping check on criminals and suspects of alien birth, and guarding Royalty and distinguished visitors. Anarchists and spies, not to mention suffragettes, have been among its responsibilities.

By reason of its nature it seldom comes into the limelight, and complete lack of publicity is its hall-mark of success. Of necessity it keeps in close touch with the police departments of other nations.

During the later years of the last century it was literally blown into existence by a series of dynamite outrages which shook England. Parliamentary history was made by the passing of an Act against these in a single day. Between the first day of March, 1883, and the last day of January, 1885, there were thirteen explosions in London alone, some of which caused considerable damage. Two occurred on 15th March of 1883. One, in the offices of *The Times* newspaper, was a failure; but another in Westminster did much harm to buildings, fortunately without any casualties. On 30th October of the same year two explosions occurred on London's underground railways and over sixty people were injured near Praed Street Station. Victoria Station was damaged on 27th February, 1884. On the following day parcels were discovered at Charing Cross and Paddington stations containing dynamite and clockwork mechanism for igniting fuses. The clockwork was of American origin. A similar discovery was later made at Ludgate Hill Station.

But the most shattering blow of all occurred on 30th May, 1884.

At twenty minutes past nine in the evening a terrific explosion destroyed part of Scotland Yard itself.

It so happened that at the moment of the explosion the offices of the Yard were completely empty—a state of affairs that must seem strange to those who work in the Yard to-day, for its vast buildings are never without occupants.

Two officers had left the Yard a few minutes before the explosion. Detective Sergeant Sweeny (later, Detective Inspector) was the last to go. His desk, which he had just vacated, was blown to pieces. It was later discovered that a bomb had been placed in a lavatory. The crime was never brought home to the perpetrators, though two men, Barton and Cunningham, were suspected. Six months later these two were arrested for being concerned in causing an explosion at the Tower of London and were sent to penal servitude for life.

The force of the Yard explosion severely damaged a public house, 'The Rising Sun', to the great profit of the landlord, who charged threepence for admission to see the damage and who sold more drink to visitors in a month than he had done in the previous twelve.

On the 13th of December, 1884, an attempt was made to blow up London Bridge and a big hole was breached in one of the buttresses. From the position of the damage it was quite clear that the bomb must have been fixed from a boat, but no trace of a boat was ever found.

The Special Branch had under surveillance at this time Lomasney and Fleming. Both were members of the Clan-na-Gael, an extreme Irish Republican party. Lomasney had been a captain in the United States Army. After the explosion both men disappeared from their usual haunts, but it was not until four years later that the Yard was satisfied that both men and the boat had been blown to pieces by their own bomb.

Even more audacious was the attempt in January 1885 to blow up the Houses of Parliament, an undertaking that had never been tried since the days of Guy Fawkes. A dynamite bomb exploded on the stairs above the crypt of the House of Commons and blew a great hole in the crypt. Police Constable Cole was on duty near the explosion, but in spite of injuries he carried a parcel of blazing explosive out of the building. He was rewarded for his courage with the Albert Medal.

It was quite evident at this time that the bomb outrages were an attempt on the part of Irish extremists to terrorize England into granting Home Rule, but for some reason never made public, the campaign ceased abruptly just at the time when it seemed to be winning some measure of success. It would not be unreasonable to suggest that the preventive work of the Special Branch had struck a vital counter-blow, for William O'Brian, the editor of *The Irish People* (long since defunct) wrote:

It was in vain that the Irish revolutionist sought to conceal his movements from the Argus-eyed Government of England. There were too many spies outside, and too many traitors within, the ranks to make real success probable or even possible.

Clan-na-Gael had an extensive organization in America, and information of its activities was largely obtained through a British agent, Major Le Caron. Born at Colchester in the English county of Essex, he went to France as a lad and worked at a restaurant kept by a couple named Le Caron, whose name he adopted. His real name was Beach. Later he emigrated to America and joined the army, rising to the rank of major. While in the army he became a member of the Clan-na-Gael,

On leaving the army he practised as an apothecary in Chicago and rose to be a Vice-President of the Pharmaceutical Society of the United States. Once he had given evidence about Irish republican activities he became a marked man, and it was necessary to place him under the protection of the Special Branch.

Officers of this Branch were called upon to deal with the activities of an unusual organization which came into being in 1895, the Legitimation League. Originally its objects were entirely philanthropic—to legitimize children born out of wedlock—but later it was found that many anarchists were attending the meetings and attempting to secure converts to their destructive creeds.

In 1898, the President of the League, Miss Lillian Harman, arrived in London from Chicago, where she had previously served a prison sentence for living with a man to whom she was not married. Miss Harman was an anarchist and the daughter of an anarchist, Moses Harman. The League came to an abrupt end after it had acted as agent for the sale of a book judged by the authorities to be an indecent sex study.

The actual publisher described himself as Dr. Roland de Villiers, M.D., and claimed to be the brother-in-law of George Astor Singer, the New York millionaire. He was, in fact, a German by birth, and his real name was George Ferdinand Springmuhl von Weisenfeld. Fleeing his own country—where he was wanted for forgery and other offences—he continued his criminal career in England, drawing as much as £60,000 from one fraudulent company alone. By means of various aliases and frequent changes of address he managed to avoid arrest until 1902. At last two detectives of the Special Branch ran him to earth. He flourished a loaded revolver, but it was knocked from his hand and he was handcuffed. He made no comment when the warrant was read to him but asked for water. It was brought, he drank a few drops and fell dead. A coroner's jury decided that he died from apoplexy.

In the closing years of the nineteenth century the unwelcome presence of anarchists occupied the attention of the Special Branch. They were mostly Italians and they took up residence in the Soho, Clerkenwell, and Whitechapel districts of London. A few Englishmen were persuaded to join them, but more in the hope of securing a share of the anarchist funds than from any genuine political convictions. In 1892 a party of anarchists was rounded up and a haul of small bombs and seditious literature seized. Three of the leaders were sentenced to ten years' imprisonment. It was urged in mitigation of the sentence that the bombs were not intended for use in England but were destined for Russia!

Two years later all Europe was stirred by anarchist activities. President Carnot of France was assassinated and there was an outbreak of murders in Italy. In London a number of post offices were damaged

by bombs. Two Italians, Polti and Farnara, were shadowed and seen to buy ingredients for explosives which they took to an address in Clerkenwell. Polti was captured a few days later with a bomb in his possession. Farnara enjoyed another week of freedom, but both were finally charged with illegal possession of explosives. Farnara, who was sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude, was removed from the dock shouting: "Vive l'Anarchie". Polti, who had acted largely under his orders, was sent to prison for ten years.

In 1894 a party of thirty Spanish anarchists arrived in England from South America and every one had to be kept under surveillance by officers of the Special Branch.

Towards the close of that year there was a bomb outrage in Mayfair and considerable damage was done to property, though no personal injuries were caused.

The final outrage attributed to Anarchists—though no culprits were ever brought to trial—occurred on 26th April, 1897, when a bomb exploded on an Underground train in the City of London. Several passengers were injured, one fatally.

Anarchists occupied the attention of the Special Branch right up to the outbreak of World War I.

In December of 1910 occurred one of the most amazing scenes that London has ever witnessed in modern times—over two hundred police officers and two squads of the Guards besieged two anarchists in Sidney Street, in London's East End. A battery of Royal Horse Artillery also arrived, but never actually went into action. The Home Secretary at that time was Winston Churchill. Mr. Churchill was quite unable to resist the opportunity of getting into danger, and was early in the firing line, an action for which he was severely criticized.

Prelude to the battle was the murder on the night of 16th December of three policemen and the wounding of two others by a gang of Russian anarchists. On that night a jeweller in Houndsditch heard mysterious knockings at the back of his shop and sent for the police. Six police officers at once went to the premises which backed on the shop. The door was opened and without warning a hail of bullets greeted the officers, three of whom were mortally wounded. With their opponents disabled, the anarchist burglars made good their escape. The men were traced from house to house and a quantity of arms, ammunition, and anarchist propaganda was seized. Finally the two ringleaders were run to earth at 100 Sidney Street, Stepney. There was positive information that they would fight to the death and that they had a vast stock of ammunition.

There were several lodgers in the house, and the first task of the police was to induce the innocent to leave the danger area. This was successfully done, and a police cordon was drawn round the whole zone.

The house was one of a terrace. The only direct approach to the room in which the men had barricaded themselves was by a narrow staircase which the two men could have defended against an army.

At 7.30 a.m. the police made their first move by knocking on the street door. There was no reply.

A police officer threw a handful of gravel at the window. Instantly it was flung open and a hail of bullets poured out. Police Sergeant Leeson fell seriously wounded (he eventually recovered) but the other officers escaped injury, one with a bullet hole through his helmet.

In view of the situation—which required energetic handling if heavy casualties were to be avoided—Scotland Yard requested military assistance, and Guardsmen were posted at strategic points with orders to fire the moment one of the men offered a target.

Invisible at the back of the dark room to those outside, the two anarchists continued to fire at anyone who came within view.

With courage and cunning the two men defied death until 1.30 p.m., when it was seen that the house was on fire. Still the men sent bullet after bullet into the street with blind ferocity. Fire-engines arrived, but the police declined to allow them to go into action. They appealed to Winston Churchill, who directed that the house should be allowed to burn down but that the conflagration should be prevented from spreading.

It was expected that the men would sell their lives in a last desperate sortie. Police and military stood tense, rifles at the alert. Nobody appeared. It became evident that the men must have perished in the flames. Police smashed down the door, but a fury of flame drove them back.

The Fire Brigade got to work and at last subdued the holocaust.

In the debris were found two charred bodies, one with a bullet hole through the skull. They were identified as the bodies of Joseph (or Yoska) and Fritz Svaars.

By 1914 two other anxieties beset the members of the Special Branch, Suffragettes and spies.

By the spring of 1913 the campaign of the militant Suffragettes had become so menacing that the authorities decided to increase the strength of the Branch. Among the outrages were the burning of a church and the horsewhipping of a Member of Parliament.

The headquarters of the organization were at Kingsway House, and from here police officers kept track of the movements of all the leaders, among them Mrs. Pankhurst and her two daughters, Sylvia and Christabel, Mary Richardson, and that grand old rebel, Mrs. Despard. A special Act of Parliament—the 'Cat and Mouse' Act—was passed, which made it an offence for any Suffragette not to register her address with the police.

In spite of these precautions outrages continued. Letter-boxes were set on fire, imprisoned Suffragettes went on hunger strike, one woman threw herself in front of the King's horse while the Derby was being run and was killed.

In 1918 the women of England were granted a vote, more, possibly, because they demonstrated their worthiness during World War I than because of their militant efforts.

At midnight on 4th August, 1914, the British Empire was at war with Germany. Within twelve hours over four hundred German agents had been rounded up by officers of the Special Branch.

This was not the result of a sudden, frenzied effort. For years every suspected alien had been under constant but unobtrusive supervision, and when the hour of midnight struck, the men of the Special Branch set out to reap the harvest of their patient, unspectacular vigilance. Merciful swiftness! The agents had no time to become spies of a nation at war, and escaped the death penalty as mere 'enemy aliens'.

Others, who escaped the first casting of the net, were not so fortunate. For them the trial, the sentence, and in the grey dawn the firing squad. Müller, Carl Lody, and Rosenthal, were three notorious spies in key positions. The Special Branch led each in turn to the Tower of London.

From America came Kuperferle, 'an American traveller in wool'. He might have remained to pull his wool over the eyes of the authorities, had not the Postal Censorship Department spotted secret writing on a letter he posted to a lady in America. His letters were intercepted and the invisible writing developed. He was followed from Liverpool to Dublin, from Dublin to London. Letters to Switzerland—they did not reach their destination in the same form as he had sent them—gave accurate information about the embarkation of British troops. He was arrested finally at Victoria Station and taken to the Yard, where Sir Basil Thompson, Assistant Commissioner of Police, interrogated him.

Claiming to be an American subject, Kuperferle stood his trial before three judges with all the traditional ceremony of English law. Confronted with his accusers, he discarded subterfuge.

"I am a German soldier: I did this for my country," he declared.

But the inevitability of the verdict unnerved him. Before the end of the trial he was found hanging in his cell.

The case against Kuperferle was built up largely on scientific evidence. When he was arrested, a cut lemon, a pen, and a bottle of formalin were found in his room. Analysis showed that a steel object had been thrust into the lemon, and there were traces of lemon-juice and formalin on the nib of the pen.

Formalin added to lemon-juice produces an invisible ink that requires considerable heat to develop it.

The defence maintained that Kuperferle required the formalin for his feet. Sir John Simon who prosecuted put a damning question to the expert witness. "Have you ever heard of formalin being applied to the feet with a steel pen?"

In his office overlooking the river Sir Basil Thompson interviewed many suspected spies. His quiet, charming manner lured on more than one German agent to an incautious admission—to the firing squad.

Early in the war spy-scares swept the country, and the work of the Special Branch was made no lighter by numerous reports of suspicious activities made by patriotic members of the public.

It is safe to say that the spy menace in England was mastered in the early days of World War I: the Special Branch had then no such problems as confronted their colleagues in World War II, when the country was infested by agents who had come over with the host of refugees from Adolf Hitler's Reich, many of them vouched for by men and women prominent in public life. This advance guard was constantly reinforced by air and sea.

A brief lull after 1918 was followed by further spy scares. This time a certain section of the public pointed to Soviet Russia as the next enemy. Grim stories were told of sinister Bolshevik activities. The matter came to a head when members of the Special Branch raided 'Arcos'.

On the eve of World War II extremist efforts to enforce complete independence for Ireland harassed a Special Branch already at grips again with a far more serious spy problem. There were several bomb outrages which caused damage and casualties. Clashes between Communists and Fascists also demanded special vigilance if the peace were to be preserved.

Then came World War II, and it was at once apparent that Britain was faced with a problem of widely-scattered, well-trained enemy agents. Their organization was superb and their work was aided by a certain number of Englishmen—and women—who honestly believed that the Nazi policy was the only safeguard against the Communist invasion of the world.

It is not yet possible—and for security reasons probably never will be—to tell the full story of the fight against Nazi spies. It was far more successful than most people believe. Indeed, reports of failure served the nation well.

Most of the king-pins were rounded up early in the war. One, knowing himself to be surrounded by enemies, took his own life. The inquest, which was never reported in any newspaper, was attended by high officials of the Yard and of M.I.5 (Military Intelligence). At its conclusion *the dead man walked out*.

What was the answer to the riddle? There may still be enemies who would like to know.

From time to time spies were dropped by parachute—brave men who knew the risks but who faced them with all the fervour of perverted Nazi patriotism.

Two such landed in the flat, lonely fens near Cambridge. Their career as spies was short-lived, for one injured his ankle in landing and the other was captured a week later.

The equipment of both bore testimony to Teutonic thoroughness. They carried portable wireless transmitters, forged English identity cards, ration cards, and innocent-looking letters in addition to large sums of English money.

Many spies landed in England from the sea during the war years. Not all were Germans. Belgians and Dutchmen, lured by Nazi gold from the path of patriotism, claimed hospitality as fugitives from the very tyranny they had promised to support.

But the two who landed in a lonely part of Kent in 1940 during the Battle of Britain were Germans. They crossed the Channel in a rowing-boat and succeeded in getting ashore. On a deserted spot in the Kent marshes they set up a wireless transmitter and got in touch with German headquarters. Unfortunately for the intrepid pair, one went into a public-house for a glass of beer and gave a £5 note in payment. His accent roused the suspicion of the customers, and before long the Special Branch were on his track. Both men were caught.

Many of the ablest men in the Special Branch served in the Intelligence Service with the armed Forces overseas during the war.

The investigations of Special Branch officers in the autumn of 1946 cut short the career of a young swindler who had bluffed his way into the possession of embarkation permits and a priority air passage. When charged before a London magistrate he pleaded guilty to leaving the country without permission, to obtaining food and lodging at a London club by false pretences, and to thefts of uniform.

Released from prison, so Detective Inspector George Smith of the Special Branch told the magistrate, the man, who was twenty-five, donned naval uniform and mingled with officers returning to duty in France. At Paris he represented himself to be an officer in the Canadian R.N.V.R., and was given authority to travel to Marseilles, but he left the train and made his way to Brussels. From there, with the aid of forged papers, he obtained a priority air passage to England, lived in London with a number of different women and later went to Wilhelms-haven where he came under the notice of the Field Security Police. He escaped to Amsterdam and was finally arrested while trying to cross the German Frontier.

He went to prison for twelve months

At least one member of the Special Branch is known in America. He is ex-Detective Inspector W. H. Thompson who has accompanied Winston Churchill on his travels before and during the war. In his

book of reminiscences¹ Inspector Thompson pays a tribute to the efficiency and co-operation of the American police, and is whole-hearted in his admiration for John T. McCormick of the *Chicago Tribune*, in his fight against gangsters.

The Special Branch figured in a case of international interest in September of 1945 when William Joyce, ex-member of the British Union of Fascists and known to millions of listeners for his pro-Nazi broadcasts from Germany as Lord Haw-Haw, stood his trial for high treason.

There were three counts in the indictment, to all of which he pleaded not guilty. They were: (1) That on 18th September, 1939, and on other days between that day and the 29th May, 1945, he, being a person owing allegiance to our lord the King, and while a war was being carried on by the German Realm against our King, did traitorously adhere to the King's enemies in parts beyond the seas, that is to say, in Germany, by broadcasting propaganda; (2) That on the 26th September, 1940, being a person owing allegiance as in the other count, adhered to the King's enemies by purporting to become naturalized as a subject of Germany; (3) This count was identical with the first except that the dates of broadcasting propaganda were the 18th September, 1939, and on days between that day and the 2nd July, 1940.

The indictment was based on the statute of treason of 1351.

One of the exhibits at the trial was Joyce's applications for a passport in which he declared himself to be a British subject.

For the defence it was urged that Joyce had in fact never been a British subject, and that he did not become one by making a false declaration in order to obtain a passport. Joyce's father, it was stated, was a naturalized American citizen, and the accused was born in the State of New York.

The argument did not prevail: it was ruled that if Joyce did in fact hold a British passport (even if wrongly obtained), he was entitled to the protection of the King. Reciprocally, he owed a duty of allegiance to the King who afforded him that protection. The only point at issue, therefore, was whether Joyce did hold such a passport, and it was proved beyond all doubt that he did.

Joyce was convicted, sentenced to death and hanged.

Whatever his faults—and the public had little doubt that Joyce deserved to die—he was a man of great physical courage. As a public speaker in England in the Fascist cause he was never so happy as when facing a hostile audience. The long, disfiguring scar on his cheek was the result of active opposition at a meeting and not of duelling in Germany as has sometimes been stated. He met his death with the same courage that he had always shown when confronted by an angry crowd.

One of the witnesses for the prosecution was Detective Inspector

¹ *Guard from the Yard*, Jarrolds, London.

Albert Hunt of the Special Branch, who said he first met Joyce as a member of the British Union of Fascists in 1934. He later became a member of the National Socialist League. On a number of occasions witness had heard him make public speeches and he was familiar with his voice. He instantly recognized that voice in a broadcast from Germany while he was at Folkestone in the early days of the war. He heard the voice again on numerous occasions between 1939 and 1944, and on January 30th of 1943 he took a shorthand note of what was said. This was in the course of his duty. Under cross-examination Hunt could not be shaken in his claim to recognize the voice.

The official story of Special Branch activities during the war may never be fully told. The appearance of Detective Inspector Hunt in the witness-box was one of those rare occasions when its work received a small measure of publicity.

There can be no doubt that Joyce received information for his propaganda broadcasts from England, and it was the work of the Special Branch to find out how and from whom.

They were more successful than the public is aware.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FLYING SQUAD AND SOME OTHERS

MORE misconception exists in the public mind about the famous 'Flying Squad' than about any other section of Scotland Yard's activities.

The Metropolitan Police maintain a large fleet of vehicles both for crime work and for administrative duties, and while the Flying Squad is a very important section, it is at the same time a very small section. Most people would be astonished to learn how small, for every police car seen in action, whether hurrying to the scene of a crime or in pursuit of suspects in a stolen car, is credited with belonging to the Flying Squad. In point of fact very few people are aware of having seen a Flying Squad car in action, for none of the vehicles bears the Yard's official insignia or is driven by a uniformed constable. For obvious reasons the Squad is the most silent and secret of the Yard's services to the public, and every unit of it preserves a strict anonymity. Another section of cars for crime work which are not easily recognized as police cars are the 'Q' cars.

The Flying Squad is directed by a Chief Inspector who works under the Assistant Commissioner for Crime. All members of the Squad—except drivers and wireless operators—are members of the C.I.D. The duties of its personnel are many and varied, and it has no territorial limits like the wireless patrol cars which are normally confined to their own particular areas. It can strike surely, unexpectedly, and swiftly at very high speeds.

The Squad was, in fact, in existence before the war of 1914-18 as a mobile body of detectives attached to the Central Office and available for use in any part of the Metropolitan area in an emergency. After the war it still further increased its mobility to cope with criminals who themselves used cars.

The original Flying Squad used tenders for transport and its personnel was chosen from C.I.D. officers in every division who had a reputation for thief catching. Keen, observant young men for the most part, they made it part of their duty to keep observation not only on known thieves but on those who consorted with them. Thus they were able to round up not only men with records but men against whom there had been no previous convictions.

The following case, which ex-Divisional Detective Inspector Selby recalls, illustrates the value of the method.

A young man with the appearance of being a Colonial ex-soldier was seen in the West End in company with a well-known burglar. From that time on he was kept under observation by the Squad and

was traced to the East End, where he was found to be consorting with a Jewish woman. One day he was joined by two other men, also apparently Colonials, and the appearance of all four was noted.

Later, the Squad, while on patrol, observed the four in the vicinity of a large house standing in its own grounds in North London. That night a report came in that the house had been burgled.

Making use of their knowledge, the Squad visited the woman in the East End and were able to find some of the stolen property in her possession. It was hidden in a copper under a pile of dirty clothes.

The gang was rounded up, and the police then learnt that two of the men had criminal records in Australia and South Africa. All four were convicted.

One old thief had a long run of success before he was finally caught, chiefly because he always worked alone and took care after each job to avoid any appearance of sudden prosperity. Night after night he would sit in the corner of his favourite public-house unobtrusive and alone. He was a familiar and unsuspected figure to the watchful detectives. Although he was sixty-seven he was as agile as a monkey and he earned his living as a 'portico thief', or in more modern phraseology as a cat-burglar.

One night a police constable who had deviated from his beat for shelter saw a figure climb over a high wall and drop lightly to the ground. He followed and saw the figure start to climb the portico of a large house. The old man had attempted his last job. When arrested he confessed to a number of burglaries and told the detectives how he had sometimes spent several days and nights in ditches in order to study the habits of the occupants of large houses before making his raid.

The value of observation was again illustrated when, as Divisional Detective Inspector, Mr. W. W. Selby was stationed at Twickenham. It was a time when there had been an epidemic of burglaries at hotels in popular holiday resorts.

Inspector Selby noticed that a well-known publican in the district was friendly with a convicted thief. Although at the time he had no reason to connect this fact with the hotel robberies, he made enquiries and found that the publican was in the habit of taking frequent short holidays and staying at the best hotels, seldom remaining for long at any one place. He decided that the gentleman should be kept under observation. With excellent results, for in a few days three known criminals visited him in a stolen car. Watch was continued for two or three more days, then the house raided and a quantity of property stolen from hotel bedrooms was found.

At the subsequent trial it was proved that while the publican himself had not carried out the thefts, he had taken an impression of his bedroom key at each hotel where he had stayed and had passed the mould to one or other of the criminals. They in turn had waited until suitably

wealthy victims occupied the rooms and had then gained access with the greatest ease.

Detective Inspector Selby was concerned also in investigating the death of Buck Emden at a West End club. Buck, a Jew, was a market porter who worked hard at his job and who had also a flair for spotting winners. Shortly before his death he went to the races at Epsom with little in his pockets and returned the richer by £4,500. He visited the club and was inveigled into an argument. In the subsequent scuffle he was stabbed by a member of a well-known race gang, and kicked, mortally wounded, down the stairs. He died in the street.

His assailant was fortunate to escape with a penalty of three years for manslaughter.

Among his cases was the Thompson and Bywaters murder, and in company with Inspector Page he arrested Bywaters who 'fell to pieces' when charged.

Frederick Bywaters was a young ship's writer who became infatuated with Mrs. Edith Thompson and fell completely under her influence. On the night of 3rd October, 1922, while the Thompsons were returning home from the theatre, Bywaters came up from behind them and stabbed the husband with a ferocious blow that drove the blade through his neck and throat.

After Bywaters' arrest the police found letters from Mrs. Thompson, and she, too, was charged with the murder. "Be jealous, so much that you will do something desperate," read a passage from one.

Both were found guilty and hanged after their appeal had been dismissed.

Yet another case in which Mr. Selby was concerned was the 'Brides in the Bath' case.

Mr. Selby trained under Detective Superintendent 'Jim' Neal—'one of the best policemen for detection the Yard ever had'.

The Squad came into public prominence and earned its present name shortly after World War I, when England produced its one and only serious epidemic of gangsterdom. By 1919 every big race-course in England was hag-ridden by race gangs which levied heavy tolls on bookmakers and others in a vast and well-organized 'Protection' racket. The bookmaker paid toll for his stand, was forced to employ tic-tac men at an enormous wage, and even had to contribute heavily for the privilege of having his board wiped clean after each race. Woe betide the bookie who refused to play ball! He was crowded off his pitch, his gear was smashed, his money scattered and stolen, and if he escaped without serious personal injury he was fortunate indeed.

Such a profitable occupation naturally attracted many men in search of easy money. Not all of them were crooks by instinct or upbringing: some were young ex-Servicemen trained to swift violence and unable to obtain employment. As was inevitable, rival gangs sprang up and bitter feuds followed.

It is, perhaps, only fair to say that the efforts of the gangsters were for the most part directed against each other, and ordinary members of the public were seldom molested unless they attempted to interfere.

For a long time the 'Brummies', or Birmingham gang, ruled the roost, but by 1919 the London boys had accepted the challenge. A free fight at King's Cross railway station in 1919 resulted in the death of a gangster and serious injury to a detective.

Matters came finally to a head in 1924 when the 'Brummies' and the Londoners prepared for a pitched battle after the Derby. As a rule gang feuds were fought out with razors, knuckle-dusters, boots, and fists, but on this occasion members of both gangs carried fire-arms. The police, through the smart action of an officer in the 'V' Division, learnt that the 'Brummies' had concentrated at a hotel on the road from Epsom to London where they hoped to waylay their rivals.

The Yard acted promptly. A strong cordon of police, for once armed with automatics, was thrown round the hotel. The gangsters panicked. There was little resistance; weapons were hurriedly thrown away to avoid evidence for a serious charge, and the men submitted to being rounded up. Twenty-eight prisoners, all handcuffed, appeared before the Epsom magistrates next day. Sentences were severe, and from that day the race-course gangs began to decline. The Jockey Club and the bookmakers took vigorous action to protect their interests and safety, and this menace to public order was stamped out.

But the Flying Squad had proved its usefulness and its work was directed into other channels.

The Police Radio Patrol cars are a familiar sight to Londoners, many of whom have seen them in action. Sometimes their work is spectacular, and the Press frequently records incidents in which patrol cars have been involved.

An exciting chase took place through Islington, North London, on the night of 5th December, 1946, when the crew of a police car was overtaken by a motor driven at high speed. The police gave chase sounding their gong, but the car failed to stop. There was a collision when the car attempted to turn and the driver of the suspect car was injured. Three men attempted to escape, and two of them were later detained.

Even more spectacular was the pursuit of a stolen car across South London in January of 1947. The car, which had been stolen, was chased at a very high speed through Battersea and Wandsworth into Wimbledon. As the two cars dashed through crowded streets a passenger in the stolen car threw glass and metal at his pursuers. After forcing the police car on to the foot-walk at Wimbledon, the driver of the stolen car doubled back to Wandsworth where he was finally overtaken. The three occupants were arrested, not without a struggle in the case of the driver. Charges of breaking and entering a garage at Hendon, stealing a car, driving it

away without the consent of the owner and having no policy of insurance followed.

In a single day of November 1946 ten men were arrested by crews of Area cars. In five out of the seven cases in which the men were concerned, use was made of the Emergency (999) system and arrests were effected in fast (but not record) time. In one case three men were actually arrested four minutes after the first alarm had been given. In all, during the first ten months of 1946, nearly 5,000 arrests were made by crews.

For administrative purposes the Yard's fleet of vehicles is vested in the Receiver who purchases them, repairs them, and finally sells them. A portion of the fleet is handed over to the Commissioner for operation on police duties, and the remainder is kept as a reserve. In 1946, 793 vehicles were in use, 564 of them being cars and vans, and 229 motor-cycles. This was an increase of 88 vehicles over 1945. Control over all operating vehicles is exercised by a Deputy Commander, Captain R. P. Minchin. In 1946 the mileage of Metropolitan Police vehicles reached the astronomical total of 15,576,749, an increase of 2,757,147 miles over 1945.

The fleet is divided into five, one portion of 141 vehicles being retained for use at headquarters. This includes staff cars, Flying Squad cars, tenders, wireless vans, instructional vehicles, Public Carriage Office vehicles, a photography van, vehicles for a children's bus service, and a horse-box.

The other portions of the fleet are allocated to the four districts. In the case of the wireless and patrol cars, these are normally confined to their own areas, but in an emergency they are instructed to carry on the chase—far beyond their own limits if necessary.

Every effort is made to deal with bandit cars in safe area and to warn the public by sign and gong that police cars are in action. Shock tactics are, as far as humanly possible, only employed at the risk of the actual police engaged. Of course, icy roads and bad weather sometimes make skidding unavoidable.

There are over one hundred small police garages, but in each district there are two large garages, each with an inspector in charge. At these district garages are stationed sections of the Engineer's Department which deals with repairs, and here the spare vehicles are housed. Vehicles are oiled and greased every 500 miles by police personnel and high-pressure lubrication is employed. Every 5,000 miles each vehicle is withdrawn from service for a technical inspection. Urgent repairs are then carried out, and notice given, if necessary, that the vehicle must be returned in so many miles for further work.

Unlike the police officers who normally (with the exception of members of the C.I.D.) have eight hours on duty and sixteen off, the cars perform two tours of eight hours, with eight off for washing and general maintenance work.

In addition to other duties, headquarters fleet also maintains a

dispatch service, taking copies of publications to all police-stations and to the main railway stations for delivery to provincial Forces. Tenders are used for the transport of stores, conveyance of personnel, etc.

The police motor-cyclists have been trained to a state of parade-ground efficiency. Normally they are engaged on traffic duties and on patrol work in the outlying and thinly populated districts, but when occasion demands they undertake more spectacular duties. During the Victory Processions the police motor-cyclists headed the escorts to Chiefs of Staff and Allied Commanders. Sixteen police motor-cyclists also formed the spearhead of the mechanized section.

Considering the enormous police mileage, accidents are rare, and becoming rarer. It must be borne in mind that very strict rules are observed in keeping records, and a trivial occurrence, such as a private motorist would dismiss without a second thought, ranks as an accident if the driver is in any way considered to blame. The figures given below include even cases where a stationary and unattended police car has been damaged, if it was considered that the vehicle had not been parked in a place of perfect safety.

"My goal," says Captain Minchin, "is an average of not more than one accident in 50,000 miles over a period of six years." The table shows how that aim is being achieved.

1934	1 accident in	8,800 miles	
1935	" "	13,829	"
1945	" "	38,040	"
1946	" "	48,677	"

Some idea of how this standard of driving is attained may be gathered by reference to the section on the Police Driving School.

In cases of dangerous driving the officers are treated as ordinary citizens and prosecuted on occasions in the courts.

THE TRAFFIC OF LONDON

WHEN one considers the vast stream of traffic—buses, cars, lorries, horse-drawn vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians—that pours into London daily, one wonders, not that delays occur, but that anything ever reaches its destination.

And the problem becomes daily more acute. There is hardly a road in the Metropolis that was designed to carry its present volume of vehicles, and a hold-up, even for a few minutes, may cause utter chaos and affect the flow of traffic in streets a long distance away.

In the circumstances it is not surprising that the advice of the experts in the Traffic Department is heard as high as Cabinet level when matters of replanning London, siting new industries, and reconstructing roads are discussed.

One of the most obvious results of the Department's work is the automatic traffic signal system. Some 900 London road junctions are controlled by these, and while they are neither erected nor maintained by the police (the Ministry of Transport pays 60 per cent of the cost and the Local Authority the remaining 40 per cent), the advice of the Department's experts is invariably taken. The Yard's Statistical Section provides full information about the black spots for accidents, and at these spots, wherever practicable, automatic lights are installed. There are several varieties, but they all have one object, to make driving as simple and safe as possible.

Some of the lights are pad-operated, that is, controlled by the passage of a vehicle over a rubber pad set in the road; others change at fixed intervals. Some show an arrow when filtration to the left is allowed, others show a period of all red lights so that pedestrians may cross.

Experimental use was made before the war of 'invisible' ray control of the lights. The experiment had to be discontinued at the outbreak of war because the 'invisible' ray was too bright for black-out regulations! It had not proved entirely satisfactory, one of its drawbacks being its attraction for children who delighted in operating it, to the delay of road traffic.

The police have their own portable traffic light sets for use on roads blocked by repairs. These sets were also used at dangerous junctions during the black-out, when the risk to an officer on point duty would have been too great.

The Department has a squad of officers to inspect the traffic lights, and another ready to take control should the lights at any junction fail.

The siting of taxi-stands in the congested streets is another police duty, and a balance has to be drawn between avoiding obstruction and meeting the public need. Blank walls and wide roads offer convenient sites, but the supply of both in London is strictly limited. Separate arrangements have to be made for the parking and flow of taxis at each London theatre to avoid complete congestion in the West End at night.

The route of every London bus service has to receive police approval, which is given only after careful consideration of existing traffic and public needs. Even more care is necessary in the selection of bus stops—a matter regarded as so important that there is a special sub-committee (of which Superintendent Wells of the Traffic Department is chairman) to consider the whole question.

The problem is far more complicated than casual thought might indicate. The natural ambition of the London Passenger Transport Board is to locate its bus stops as near to Underground stations and road junctions as possible for the convenience of its passengers. Such an arrangement does not make for safety or the smooth flow of traffic. There are other considerations. Occupiers of business and professional premises do not welcome bus stops outside their doors; owners of large stores complain that cars are prevented from drawing up; in residential areas householders not unnaturally resent the presence of a stationary bus with the top deck level with their bedroom windows. On the other hand, tobacconists and newsagents have no objection to bus queues outside their shops.

The Department advises the Ministry of Transport in regard to the selection of one-way streets. In certain streets the principle is satisfactory, and they have not proved unduly dangerous.

Every motorist who has occasion to drive in London has a personal concern in the matter of parking. After a long and difficult journey through London streets, nothing is more irritating than to find there is no car park available near the destination, or that the nearest car park is full. Sometimes in desperation he decides to risk it and leaves his car beside the kerb. When he returns he may find a police officer standing by it with a sequel of a summons for obstruction. His first reaction, perhaps, is that the police are looking for convictions. One hears in the courts such remarks from defendants as: "Why don't you catch criminals instead of harassing motorists?"

But the parking problem is a headache for the police as well as for the motorists. Their problem is to ensure that a vehicle is able to travel from A to B, and, the lay-out of London being what it is, certain streets must be devoted to *moving* traffic.

Recently a new scheme has been introduced which prohibits waiting in certain streets, and 'no go slow' in others. In the former no vehicle may park between 11.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. from Monday to Friday; cars may stop only long enough to put down passengers; taxis may not wait while their fares make calls, and street traders' barrows are pro-

hibited at all hours unless licensed by the local authority. In the 'no go slow' streets all vehicles capable of less than 8 m.p.h., all horse-drawn and hand-propelled vehicles (except those going to a destination in the street) are banned between the hours of 9 to 11 a.m. and 4 to 6 p.m. from Monday to Friday. If the scheme proves satisfactory, there will be a considerable extension. 'No waiting' streets are marked by yellow bands on the lamp-posts, and yellow arrows on the kerbs.

One possible solution of a problem that is becoming more acute lies with the traders and directors of big stores themselves. They could consider the co-operative purchase of sites to be converted into car parks for their customers. The cost in such a centre as Oxford Street would be high, but cars could be parked on several floors and the scheme would be profitable in the long run.

The Traffic Department, as consultants in all town-planning schemes, advise where possible the siting of new buildings and offices so as to attract heavy traffic away from the centre of London. Increasing air traffic, for example, means increasing road traffic, since passengers have to reach the central offices and to be taken from them to the air-port by motor-coach.

The Department has also to concern itself with the plans of London's boroughs and to co-ordinate their highway work. This, among other things, to avoid repairs to two main parallel streets at the same time. The effect of 'street up' notices simultaneously in Oxford Street and Marylebone Road, two great highways administered by different authorities, can be imagined by London drivers!

Other items with which the Department is vitally concerned (and in regard to which it generally has the last word) are the provision of road roundabouts, traffic signs, and street lighting.

Sometimes it is necessary for a load of a special nature to cross London. Road transport can now carry loads that even the railways cannot handle. A modern transformer, for example, may weigh 140 tons and occupy 12 feet of the road. It would be quite impossible to transport such a cumbersome piece of machinery without police assistance. The route has to be planned in advance (having due regard to London's many bridges, some of which cannot stand such a weight, and others of which offer insufficient clearance) and the time carefully chosen. Police escorts are provided where necessary.

It is on State occasions—Royal processions, Victory celebrations, and the like—that the Traffic Department really receives the recognition that it deserves. On such occasions it has the final word in making arrangements, and arrangements are far from simple. Not only must the pre-arranged route be kept clear, and exceptionally heavy traffic caused by sightseers kept in hand, but the normal life of London must go on as usual. One complication arises from the fact that crowds have to be fed, and vans and lorries for catering firms must be allowed passage.

For these events the streets have to be chosen, motorists provided

with pass labels in different colours, each colour with an approved route printed on the back. Police motor-cyclists and wireless vans are detailed, and even the services of the British Broadcasting Corporation enlisted.

All directions are issued from a central control room, usually at the Yard, though for the Derby this is transferred to a wireless-equipped tent on Epsom Downs.

Traffic direction for the Derby has been controlled from the air on one or two occasions, the police using an autogiro, but the routes are now so clearly marked and patrolled that this is no longer necessary. Survey of London's traffic has also been attempted from the air, but poor visibility owing to high buildings renders this inefficient.

In all matters affecting motorists, the two great organizations, the Automobile Association and the Royal Automobile Club, give advice and co-operation.

At the beginning of the war, the Department had to supply patrols as escorts for military convoys across London. At that time troops were supplied only with one-inch maps, which were inadequate for picking a fast route. The Department had also to arrange for general evacuation from the Metropolis. A traffic operations room functioned twenty-four hours a day for seven days a week throughout the war.

In June, July, and August of 1944 over 125,000 vehicles were escorted across London on their way to the invasion ports.

The Department has a great admiration for the American system of fly-over junctions, but the lay-out of London does not allow for the provision of the clover-leaf pattern except at prohibitive cost. London, however, is not without its fly-over systems, which motorists use every day without realizing their existence. Examples are to be found in Rosebery Avenue, Holborn Viaduct, on the Watford by-pass and the Kingston by-pass, and Waterloo Bridge.

An important section of the Department is the Public Carriage Office, which has its headquarters in Lambeth Road across the river.

This section is responsible for, first, the inspection and licensing of all motor-cabs in the Metropolis; secondly, for testing the suitability and physical fitness of all public service vehicle drivers and conductors and all taxi-cab drivers; and, thirdly, to undertake the driving-tests of public service vehicle drivers and taxi-drivers.

The London taxi-cab has to conform to very high standards before it can receive a license-plate entitling it to ply for hire. It is quite useless for a would-be taxi owner to hire a taxi-meter for a private car. One of the first requirements is the ability of the vehicle to turn on either lock without reversing within a roadway not more than 25 feet wide. In addition, the chassis must be specially designed to withstand the strain imposed by so sharp a turn. This involves a special design for the springs.

Before any new type of taxi can be put on the streets, blue-prints and full specifications have to be delivered to the Public Carriage Office.

If these are approved, the manufacturer must demonstrate the prototype, and thereafter every model submitted for examination must be accompanied by a declaration that it conforms in every detail with the original.

It is not sufficient for the taxi to be approved at the time of manufacture: every taxi must be brought in for inspection twice a year to one of the four Passing Stations of the Public Carriage Office in the Metropolis.

In August of 1939 there were 7,300 taxi-cabs on the streets of London. When war broke out the number dropped to 4,830, due to the fact that some 2,000 were taken over to draw trailer fire-pumps for use in air raids. These were replaced by heavier vehicles, and the number of available taxis rose to 5,500 in May of 1940. The coming of peace saw a large drop in numbers. Many had become unserviceable owing to war conditions and constant use on damaged roads, and lack of spare parts made repairs impossible. The numbers are now (mid 1947) slowly rising as new vehicles appear.

The taxi-meter is not the property of the cab owner as a general rule, but is hired from a specialist firm. Regulations regarding construction and use of meters are as strict as those for the cabs, to protect both public and driver. Two models of every new type have to be submitted to the Public Carriage Office, one of which will be retained and the other forwarded to the National Physical Laboratory, where it will be taken to pieces.

Each individual meter is inspected and sealed twice a year by both Police and National Physical Laboratory.

The very strict regulations include provisions for three, and only three, positions of the meter flag which must be so constructed that it cannot rest in any other position. These are the upright—'For Hire'—position, the 'Hired' position, and the 'Stopped' position (to which the driver must set it immediately he reaches his destination).

As is generally known, taxi-meters work by a combination of time and distance, clockwork mechanism coming into operation while the cab is waiting for the passenger to make a call.

Equally strict are the regulations concerning the drivers themselves. First essentials are physical fitness and good character, then knowledge of London. This knowledge can only be acquired the hard way. It takes on an average nine months to acquire, for the driver has to know the exact location of 618 hospitals, 177 police-stations, 277 theatres and music-halls, 455 railway stations, in addition to numerous residential areas, clubs, police courts, and public buildings, and, of course, London's thousands of streets.

There is only one way to learn, and that is by cycling.

When the candidate has passed fitness, character, and knowledge of London tests, he must present himself for his driving test. He will be required, among other things, to reverse in a 17-ft. roadway in not more than three movements without fouling the kerb. Throughout,

special attention will be paid by the examiner to the way in which the driving will affect the comfort of passengers.

As a general rule the taxi-driver undergoes a medical examination every five years after he has reached the age of fifty. If he is over sixty-five he must be examined every year. Superintendent Gould, of the Police Carriage Office, recalls how one elderly driver was seen to fall over the wheel while on test. The examiner switched off the ignition and directed the cab to the kerb. The driver was found to have died! The oldest taxi-driver on record was eighty-two.

Formerly the Public Carriage Office controlled also London's horse-cab drivers, and visitors will regret to learn that the last two of these vehicles have now been withdrawn. The hansom cab that stood for so many years outside Regent's Park Underground Station was very popular with Americans and Colonials when they visited the Zoo.

There are still two horse-drawn omnibuses in the Metropolitan Police area. They ply between Chessington South Station and Chessington Zoo.

Other duties of the Public Carriage Office are attendance at inquests on all road accident cases where there is an allegation of defective machinery; the petrol rationing for taxi-cabs; and the supervision of driving-tests for bus, tram, and trolley-bus drivers.

London's traffic is a problem of such magnitude that an Assistant Commissioner (at present Mr. Henry Dalton, O.B.E.) presides over the Traffic Department of the Metropolitan Police with a mixed staff of police officers and civil servants under him. The Department was set up at the close of World War I.

CHAPTER XV

THE POLICE AT SCHOOL

PEEL HOUSE

NOT everyone can be trained to become a successful police officer. Certain very definite qualities are necessary, and these include courage, quickness of thought, an eye for detail, and a reliable memory. But even the possession of these is of no value without highly specialized training.

The thirteen-week preliminary instruction which recruits to the Metropolitan Police Force receive is probably the most intensive and best balanced course in the world. It is calculated to sift out the unsuitable and to direct the abilities of the others into useful channels.

Whence does the Force draw its recruits?

The answer is that no class, section or type of the community can claim to provide all, or even most, of our police officers. The organization is democratic in the best sense of the word. It opens its ranks to all who can pass the preliminary tests of education, intelligence, and physique, and it offers all equal opportunity to reach the higher ranks. Pay is good, promotion goes by merit, retirement after full service brings pension.

Since the war the age limit has been temporarily raised to allow entry to those who have been serving in the Forces. The record cards of one class of recruits, picked at random, show the following particulars:

<i>Pre-war Job</i>	<i>Service Rank</i>
Plumber's mate . . .	Private
Builder's apprentice .	Captain, Royal Engineers
Solicitor's clerk . . .	Staff Sergeant
Carpenter's improver .	Flying Officer
General clerk	Leading Aircraftsman, D.F.M.
Switchboard operator .	Trooper
General labourer . . .	Lance Bombardier
Skilled fitter	Corporal, R.A.F.
Baker	Flight-Lieutenant
Aircraft assembler . .	Flight-Sergeant
Motor driver	A.B. Seaman, Royal Navy
Shop assistant	Warrant Officer, R.A.F.
Clerk	Flight-Sergeant

All these, and hundreds of others, have found in the Metropolitan Police the doorway to a man-size job.

The requirements are exacting. A minimum height of 5 feet 8 inches and a minimum chest expansion of 2 inches are required, together with good teeth, perfect eyesight, hearing, and speech, and freedom from chronic ailments, deformities, and defects.

Subjects for the educational examination are English Composition, Arithmetic, Geography, and General Knowledge. The papers are designed to test the suitability of the candidate for police work, not merely his ability to pass exams. One English paper, set recently, required the candidate to describe his imaginary experiences at night in a haunted house and to draw conclusions from what he saw and heard. The time allowed was one hour.

Having been accepted as a recruit the candidate is drafted to one of the two Peel Houses for his basic training. Peel House I is situated in the heart of London; Peel House II is a former county club at Hendon—a luxurious mansion of polished floors, lofty ceilings, and huge fireplaces. The recruit can live and work and relax in ideal conditions, but work comes first. His health and comfort are studied, but there is no pampering. He is preparing for a job that will require a razor-keen intelligence and a body tuned to a perfection of tone.

At each of the Peel Houses which form the Training School Division, directed by a Superintendent, some 300 recruits are undergoing their training of thirteen weeks. Formerly they neither received uniform nor were sworn in during this period: now they receive their police clothing and take the oath on the day they arrive.

The staff at each establishment consists of a Chief Inspector, an acting Sub-Divisional Inspector, three Inspectors, five Station Sergeants, and twelve Sergeants, together with a Drill Sergeant, a Physical Training Sergeant, a Self-Defence Sergeant, and a House Sergeant who deals with messing and billeting.

There are 232 lessons in the course, which is divided into a Junior stage of five weeks, an Intermediate stage of four weeks, and a Final stage of four weeks.

The subjects which are included vary from prevention of crime to the points of the horse—knowledge of the latter being essential in cases of alleged cruelty. The recruit must learn how to handle fire-arms, how to use his pocket-book, his duty in the event of an accident (including first-aid)—everything, in fact, that the London policeman has to know.

In regard to fire-arms, the English police carry them only on very rare occasions. So strict are the conditions under which they are issued that a report must be made and handed in if the weapon is even drawn from its holster.

It is the opinion of the authorities that lack of lethal weapons tends to discourage homicide. The average criminal (if there is an average criminal) knows that he will not be a target for police bullets; on the

other hand he also knows that he will get a very stiff sentence for carrying a loaded fire-arm. As a result he goes unarmed in the vast majority of cases, recent shooting outrages notwithstanding.

Lack of weapons sometimes lands the police officer in a difficult and dangerous position, but even then he is trained to face the odds. Such a case occurred in the autumn of last year (1946).

A twenty-eight-year-old man from Hampshire, with many aliases, was wanted for various offences. He was found lashed to the wheel of a lorry after £450 worth of goods had been stolen from the warehouse where he worked. He described how he had been knocked out by a gang of thieves, but police inquiries revealed later that he had carried out the robbery and tied himself up.

By now he had disappeared. Detective Inspector H. Robinson and Detective Sergeant Watson trailed him to a lonely hide-out in Kent.

Cornered, he confronted the detectives with a fully-loaded automatic. Without hesitation they closed with him, Inspector Robinson jamming his finger between the hammer and the breech. The man wrenched the gun free and fired, but the bullet passed harmlessly into the wall. He attempted to fire again, but Sergeant Watson had managed to release the magazine and the trigger clicked on an empty breech. Weaponless, the man still showed fight, but was eventually overpowered.

For attempted murder and for making use of a fire-arm to prevent arrest, he was sent to ten years' penal servitude.

Knowledge of fire-arms had enabled the detectives to save their lives and to arrest a desperate criminal.

The training of the recruit is by no means all carried out in the lecture-room. "W-i-n-d-e-r, winder—go and clean it", is certainly the best method of training in practical work. Every imaginary type of incident is rehearsed as realistically as possible.

One incident, demonstrated in the author's presence, illustrates how thoroughly the work is done. Inside his own dwelling a householder, obviously drunk, is taking pot-shots with a revolver at a mark on the wall.

A neighbour informs a passing police constable.

The constable has already been taught that it is a criminal offence to be drunk in charge of a loaded fire-arm, and the fact that the offender is in his own house confers no immunity from arrest. He disarms his man, arrests him, takes him to the station, where he is duly charged. Later in the day the prisoner will appear in court—there is a complete reproduction of a police court at the School—and the case will be dealt with according to law.

Traffic accidents, unfortunately, form a large part of police duties in the Metropolis, and they are staged with grim realism at Peel House—so grim that it is not unknown for recruits to faint when faced with the dummy victim of a 'bad smash'.

To balance the periods of practical and theoretical work there are

intervals for physical training, drill, and self-defence, all three being planned to produce not only a healthy animal but an efficient police officer. There is nothing of the exhibition ring about the self-defence work. The recruit is taught to hold his man in all circumstances where it is humanly possible, to protect himself from major injury, and to avoid inflicting serious damage if he can. Boxing is encouraged as training in good temper, and, off duty, there are grounds and apparatus for almost every form of athletic sport. For swimming there is a covered bath forty yards long.

Lounges, billiard-rooms, canteens, a library and a silence room cater for the recruit's off-duty hours. There are drying-rooms for his clothes, and an ironing room where he may keep his uniform immaculate.

There is nothing haphazard about the work of these vital thirteen weeks. Discipline is strict, but reasonable, and the tempo of work and play keeps the recruit up to a pitch which must serve him through his strenuous years of service.

He will emerge, not as an experienced police officer, but as a police officer who knows what he has to learn and who can benefit from the experiences that will inevitably befall him.

Whatever his ambitions, he must now serve two years as a uniformed constable and take his share of wearing out the pavements on beat. Later, perhaps, if he shows special ability, he may discard his uniform for plain clothes and spend a probationary period as a detective; he may be posted to the Thames Division with its special problems on the river and round the vast and intricate systems of Dockland; he may become a member of the Mounted Branch and learn to handle the horses that have already learnt all a horse can be taught; he may take up a post inside the vast offices of the Yard itself.

But first he must serve his time as a police constable and learn the work from the bottom. There is no exception to this rule, no short cut to promotion.

As a police constable he will receive £5 5s. a week, and after two years this will be increased annually up to £6 12s. If he is promoted to sergeant his pay will be £7 10s. rising to £8 5s., and if he becomes a station sergeant he will receive up to £8 14s. a week.

Pay for the higher ranks has recently been revised. The rates are:

	<i>p.a.</i>	<i>By annual increments of</i>
Inspectors	£480	£13 to £532
Sub-Divisional Inspectors .	£560	£10 to £650
Chief Inspectors . . .	£640	£15 to £700
Superintendents . . .	£775	£25 to £925
Deputy Commanders .	£1,000	£25 to £1,1150
Commanders	£1,325	£50 to £1,525
Assistant Commissioners .	£1,900	

The Police Schools have their own museums where the exhibits are objects likely to be of use in training. Here the recruits see implements which have been wielded by criminals for all purposes—from the jemmy to the knuckle-duster. The latter is now almost obsolete. Pennies inserted between the fingers are equally effective and become innocent coins should the owner be arrested!

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The recruit has finished his basic training. The time has come when he will be assigned to his first post.

If he is fortunate he will be posted to one of the newer stations such as that which was erected at Tooting in South London in 1939, where every modern convenience has been included to help him at work and at play.

Wherever he may be posted, he will report in plain clothes for his interview with the Superintendent in charge.

If it is Tooting, he will be fortunate indeed, for he will meet Superintendent Miller,¹ a police officer with thirty-five years' service who has never lost the enthusiasm which first took him into the Force.

Tooting is the head station of W Division as well as one of the four Sub-Divisional Stations. Under Superintendent Miller are two Chief Inspectors, a Divisional Detective Inspector, and an establishment of 804. Attached is a Section House with married and single quarters.

The probationer will be shown round his new home and gently sounded on his sporting abilities, for the Division has a very high reputation for prowess at every form of sport including a record on the football field that is at present unique.

He will see his personal quarters, a well-furnished bedroom with hot and cold water laid on.

On his tour he will visit the Map room, with its numerous maps to plot the incidence of crime and accidents, the position of police and fire call-points. He may still see the intricate route-map compiled to direct essential traffic through this vast area of London during the blitz. Despite smashed bridges and blocked roads, food and munitions had to find a way across London.

He will see the Class-room, for he still has much to learn, the Communications room which is in constant touch with the Yard and with other stations in the Division; he will see the Detention room, the Charge room, and the Surgeon's room, the Matron's room, the Interview room, and the cells.

Here, if he has experienced service with the Armed Forces or lived in London through the blitz, he may reflect that the prisoner has little to grumble about in the way of accommodation. Short of luxury and liberty, there is almost every convenience. Certainly there is scrupulous

¹ Now retired.

cleanliness, and a rubber-spring mattress that makes conscience the only excuse for sleeplessness.

In addition, the female prisoner is in constant touch with the police matron. A bell-push in her cell lights up one red lamp in the matron's room and another outside the cell door which can only be extinguished beside the door itself.

In the basement he will see the garage, the stores, the stables, and the parade room.

The stores are planned in accordance with modern methods. A man may draw everything he requires in one circuit of the room without at any point retracing his steps.

From there he will pass on to the departments that have been planned for his off-duty hours. He will find a well-stocked shop where he may register for rationed goods and a canteen where he may take all his meals from a choice of menus.

He will pass on to the billiard-room and the library, a magnificent semi-circular apartment panelled in Italian walnut. There is even a Hobbies room equipped for photography and handicraft. Many members of the Force make toys for their own and their colleagues' children. Indeed, it is a boast of the Force that anything a man can make with his hands can be made by some police officer. One actually rebuilt his bombed house.

In the basement he will find a large gymnasium which can be adapted for boxing, dramatic shows, and dances.

When the blitz was at its height, Superintendent Miller did much to maintain the high level of morale by encouraging dances at the station.

Overseas visitors are often astonished by the lack of lethal equipment at a London Police Station. The police constable on duty carries nothing more formidable than a truncheon and a whistle. If he can show an urgent need, he will be issued with an automatic pistol. There are no bombs, no tear-gas. No police officer below the rank of superintendent carries a sword, and the sword is carried only on ceremonial occasions.

Tooting Police Station is a lofty building with views across London as far as the famous grand stand on Epsom race-course. Its flat roof was used during the war for plotting the course of flying-bombs, some of which fell uncomfortably close.

Superintendent Miller recalls how one night he paid a visit to the roof where a Special Constable was on duty. Suddenly a 'doodle-bug' approached and cut out its engine directly overhead. "I wanted to take cover," said the Superintendent, "and I'm sure the Special did. But he couldn't leave me and I couldn't very well leave him, so we stuck it out."

The bomb landed two blocks away and a curious effect of the blast was that it blew some clothes from a house down the lift shaft of the station and deposited some police clothing on the blitzed house.

In Superintendent Miller's office is a fine display of cups and trophies that have been won by the Division at sport. Two of the football cups have each been won for three consecutive years.



THE WIRELESS SCHOOL

Inspector A. J. Amey and his two sergeants at the Police Wireless School have a motto:

'Seconds Count'.

Certainly their pupils at Hendon have few seconds to waste, for the course lasts only three days and there is much to learn.

Twenty at a time, the chosen police officers pass through Inspector Amey's hands to be distributed among the wireless areas into which the territory of the Metropolitan Police is divided, or to form a reserve pool against emergencies.

The Instructor operates from a master station, and each pupil sits with a car radio set in front of him, receives the messages and learns to take prompt and appropriate action.

Inspector Amey is proud of his School, and its results certainly speak for themselves. In one month 548 arrests were made by wireless cars alone in the Metropolitan area, and it must always be remembered that in many of these cases prompt arrest has prevented the commission of a more serious crime. Often enough the shopbreaker has been apprehended in the very act of entering the premises.

In a recent three-week period the use of wireless was responsible for 240 arrests, most of these for offences that were far from trivial. Fifty were for breaking and entering, forty for car stealing, twenty-four for being suspected persons, fifty-five for larcenies, two for false pretences, twenty-four for unlawful possession, and forty-five for various other offences.

During this period 2,620 calls were transmitted to the wireless cars from messages received through members of the public.

Two examples show how wireless, operated by trained men, can serve police and public.

A lady, waiting for a 'bus at Kennington, South London, rested her leather case on the pavement. A thief grabbed it and swung on to a passing tram. The victim rushed for the nearest call-box and dialled 999 to report the loss. On coming out she met a constable on beat and repeated her story. He decided to take her to Kennington Police Station where she could make her complaint again. When she arrived there she found her case with the thief beside it waiting to be charged. Her '999' message had been transmitted to the nearest wireless car; the car had

overtaken the tram, officers had boarded it and found a man with a case answering to the description of the stolen property. He had been arrested and whisked in the car to the police-station before the lady and her escort could walk the short distance.

An indignant motorist entered Surbiton Police Station to report the theft of his car. He gave the number, but before he had completed the description the officer in charge turned round from his instrument.

"We've got your car, sir, and the thief," he announced.

Luck certainly took a hand here, the message had been picked up by a police patrol car on the Kingston by-pass road. The alert police officers noticed that *the number broadcast was that of the car immediately in front of them*. It was a matter of a second to accelerate and force the driver to stop.

"I admit," said the gratified owner, "I've always grudged paying the police rate. I apologize: I've had my money's worth."

Inspector Amey recalls one exciting chase along the Great West Road. Warned by wireless, the police car took up the pursuit of a vehicle believed to have been stolen. Up the 'down' lane, against the stream of traffic, the two vehicles raced until the stolen car swung right—into a blind alley. It was going too fast to stop. The parapet failed to hold, it plunged into the Thames, striking the water twenty feet from the bank.

The crew of the police car swam out and rescued the occupants!

The skipper was awarded the British Empire Medal and other members of the crew received the Commander's commendation.

Very few of the hundreds of pupils who pass through Inspector Amey's hands fail to make the grade.

"Only eight in a thousand," he says. "And then it's usually because the pupil's voice isn't suitable for broadcasting. A strong Irish brogue may be charming, but it can't always be understood instantly.

"And seconds count."



THE DRIVING SCHOOL

'There needn't be accidents.'

If all motorists underwent training that reached the standard set by the Police Driving School there would be very few.

One accident in 96,000 miles is the police record, and it would have been even higher if a driver had not been compelled to swerve to avoid a drunk!

Sir Malcolm Campbell, British ace motorist, said of the School: "It provides the finest and most severe course in the world."

An experienced police officer, now retired, pays it this tribute:

"Having driven for years, I thought I could drive. Those weeks through expert hands taught me differently."

In the main, all three wings of the School—Elementary, Motor-cycle, and Advanced—produce drivers as near to perfection as possible.

Occasionally one reads about, or even sees, a case of a police car deliberately ramming another vehicle at speed. Sometimes it does have to be done, but never if there is a possible alternative. Better, the Yard believes, to give a criminal a run for his money than to endanger the lives of innocent people.

"When a police car sets out in pursuit," said Captain R. P. Minchin, who is in charge of all Metropolitan police vehicles, "it has always a full tank. There is little likelihood of abandoning the chase through lack of petrol.

"Sometimes we follow twenty miles or more before our opportunity comes. You'd be surprised how disconcerting it is for a driver with a guilty conscience to know that he's being closely followed. As a general rule his driving deteriorates and often enough he does the job for us by running into the kerb or a traffic island."

The School has complete equipment for both the theory and the practice of driving. Its private motor-road is full of hazards which include a variety of surfaces and a skid-patch that is famous—or notorious.

So far as theory is concerned, sufficient is taught to explain 'why'; 'how' is taught on the road. A police driver must know enough about his vehicle to understand the effects of bad driving and ill-usage, and to maintain it in running order. He is not expected to be a mechanic.

Visual helps for memory are provided at all stages. Ingenious models show the oil, water, petrol, and electrical systems in operation, while actual cars, no longer fit for active police duty, are stripped, cut, and driven by electric motors so that the students may see exactly what happens inside engine, gear-box, and rear axle. How many private motorists do?

All these models, as well as the stripping and sectioning of actual cars, are made in the School by members of the staff.

Perhaps the most striking exhibit to the visitor is the model road. It is mounted on trestles, and curves in a huge horse-shoe round a vast lecture hall. Starting at a filling station, the road winds through every type of scenery. Past cross-roads, roundabouts, T-junctions, villages it goes; under and over bridges, through cuttings, up and down steep hills till it ends finally on a seaside promenade. Everything is to scale, from the model cars to the tiny duck that swims on the tiny stream. As a model it is a work of art, but it has other uses than æsthetic. There is no traffic problem that the Instructor cannot demonstrate on it with his miniature motors.

In the centre of the hall is a single-seater car, suspended in front of it a red lamp. This explains and measures the human element in one aspect of driving.

It is a well-known psychological fact that there is a time-lag between awareness of danger and appropriate reaction. This varies in different individuals and in the same individual at different times. Fatigue, illness, and alcohol all increase the time lag.

To operate the car the student sits in the driving-seat, turns the wheel as he would if the vehicle were actually moving, and presses his foot on the accelerator pedal until the speedometer registers thirty miles an hour. Suddenly the red lamp flashes. The student takes his foot off the accelerator and applies the brake. A dial behind him registers the time lapse between the flash of the light and the application of the brake. From this the Instructor can calculate how far the car would have travelled before the brake was applied.¹

The results are surprising to most motorists. To learn that one may travel anything from fifteen to fifty—or more—feet into danger before doing anything about it does tend to promote careful driving.

Sometimes speed is the one vital factor in police motoring. Often enough skilful driving is of far greater importance. Correct cornering and gear-changing are worth five miles an hour under normal traffic conditions, as the Instructor explains by diagram and demonstration.

Students in the Elementary Wing travel 2,400 miles, 800 as drivers and 1,600 as passengers, and take practical and theoretical tests before they can pass out as Third Class Drivers. They handle all sorts and conditions of vehicles under all sorts and conditions of road and weather.

Before they can hope to up-grade to First or Second Class they must drive at least 15,000 miles and return to the School for five weeks to study in the Advanced Wing. Here, with ten types of cars to practise on, they undergo long-distance tests. It is important that they should drive as carefully at the end of a day as at the beginning. From Hendon to Exeter and back is a normal training run, while such towns as Doncaster, Oxford, and Cambridge provide traffic conditions at their worst.

"We aim," says Captain Minchin, "at turning out men whose driving is beyond reproach. Men with confidence in themselves and sympathy for others. Our best drivers are put on traffic control.

"We say good drivers don't have accidents."

The School trains a thousand drivers a year, 420 in the Elementary Wing, 120 in the Advanced Wing, and 460 motor-cyclists.

In the huge garage where the training cars are housed there is a marked section for each vehicle with a sand tray underneath to catch oil. If for any reason a car engine has to be run in the garage, a fume extractor is clipped to the exhaust so that carbon monoxide will not

¹ Capt. Minchin's demonstration showed a distance of 15 feet. The author, rash enough to be tested, took 18.7 feet, which was considered an unusually good effort for one not trained at the School! The Highway Code table gives 30 feet for a driver who reacts quickly.

contaminate the air. Instead of an inspection pit there is an ingenious stand on which the vehicle is mounted so that a dozen students can watch the repair work.

A few women police officers, whose duties include driving, also receive their training at the Hendon School.

Finally there is a 'black museum' which shows the results of careless or ignorant handling—stripped gears, worn clutches, broken half-shafts, burnt-out coils, as well as specimens of various types of glass used for car windows, which show how they react to a crash



SCHOOL FOR DETECTIVES

How does the detective learn his job?

Originally he learnt it in the hard school of practical experience. The first English detectives were the Bow Street Runners. Their craft was handed down from senior to junior: it was based entirely on experience and lacked the backing of science and the Criminal Record Office.¹

In 1842 the first Metropolitan Detective Force was started, and it consisted of two inspectors and six sergeants. To-day the strength of the C.I.D. is nearly fifteen hundred.

Charles Dickens, newspaper-man before he was a novelist, knew them, and a vast improvement on the old Bow Street Police he found them.

"We are not by any means believers in the old Bow Street Police," he said. "To say the truth, we think there was a vast amount of humbug about those worthies. Apart from many of them being men of very indifferent character, and far too much in the habit of consorting with thieves and the like, they never lost a public occasion of jobbing and trading in mystery and making the most of themselves. Continually puffed besides by incompetent magistrates anxious to conceal their own deficiencies, and hand-in-glove with the penny-a-liners of that time, they became a sort of superstition. Although as a Preventive Police they were utterly ineffective, and as a Detective Police were very loose and uncertain in their operations, they remain with some people a superstition to the present day.

"On the other hand, the Detective Force organized since the establishment of the existing police, is so well chosen and trained, proceeds so systematically and quietly, does its business in such a workmanlike manner, and is always so calmly and steadily engaged in the service of the public, that the public does not really know enough of it, to know

¹ Though the Bow Street Office did keep some records of known London criminals.

a tithe of its usefulness. Impressed with this conviction, and interested in the men themselves, we represented to the authorities at Scotland Yard that we should be glad, if there were no official objection, to have some talk with the detectives. A most obliging and ready permission being given, a certain evening was appointed with a certain inspector for a social conference between ourselves and the detectives, at the *Household Words* Office in Wellington Street, Strand, London."

The first number of *Household Words* appeared in 1850 and it was discontinued in 1859.

"Just at dusk," Dickens continues, "Inspectors Wield and Stalker are announced; but we do not undertake to warrant the orthography of any of the names here mentioned. . . . Inspector Wield one might have known, perhaps, for what he is—Inspector Stalker never. . . . The Sergeants are presented—five in number. We have the whole Detective Force from Scotland Yard, with one exception.

"The whole party are in plain clothes. Sergeant Dornton, about fifty years of age, with a ruddy face and a high sunburnt forehead, has the air of one who has been a sergeant in the Army. . . . He is famous for steadily pursuing the inductive process, and, from small beginnings, working on them from clue to clue until he bags his man. Sergeant Witchem, shorter and thicker-set . . . is renowned for his acquaintance with the swell mob. Sergeant Mith, a smooth-faced man with a fresh, bright complexion, is a dab at housebreakers. Sergeant Fendall, a light-haired, well-spoken, polite person, is a prodigious hand at pursuing inquiries of a delicate nature. Straw, a little wiry sergeant of meek demeanour and strong sense, would knock at a door and ask a series of questions in any mild character you choose to prescribe for him, from a charity-boy upwards, and seem as innocent as an infant. They are, one and all, respectable-looking men; of perfectly good deportment and unusual intelligence; with nothing lounging or slinking in their manners; with an air of keen observation and quick perception when addressed, and generally presenting in their faces, traces more or less marked of habitually leading lives of strong mental excitement. They have all good eyes; and they all can, and they all do, look full at whomsoever they speak to."

Charles Dickens the journalist could hardly let such an opportunity go by without drawing stories from his guests. He learnt, among other things, how Sergeant Mith was sent to trace a Jew suspected of frauds. The Jew, carrying a green carpet-bag embroidered with a parrot escaped from Liverpool to America. Nearly a year later Mith was sent to America to trace a man who had robbed a bank in Ireland. He landed in Boston, went on to New York, and with the help of the New York Police managed to lure his man into New York State where he was captured and lodged in the Tombs. When the case came before the magistrate, Mith saw the green carpet-bag. And in it was evidence not only of the bank robbery but of the frauds committed by the Jew whom he had originally lost!



(Sport and General)

A Road in Miniature—Every type of accident and incident can safely be demonstrated here



Hendon Drivers' School—Testing the reactions of Police drivers

(Sport and General)

"For ever on the watch," Dickens concludes, "with their wits stretched to the utmost, these officers have, from day to day and year to year, to set themselves against every novelty of trickery and dexterity that the combined imaginations of all the lawless rascals in England can devise, and to keep pace with every such invention that comes out. In the Courts of Justice, the materials of thousands such stories as we have narrated—often elevated into the marvellous and romantic by the circumstances of the case—are dryly compressed into the set phrase, 'In consequence of information I received, I did so and so'.

"Suspicion was to be directed, by careful inference and deduction, upon the right person; the right person was to be taken, wherever he had gone, or whatever he was doing to avoid detection: he is taken; there he is at the bar; that is enough. From information I, the officer, received, I did it; and, according to the custom in these cases, I say no more."

But there is a tail-piece with a sting. One of the sharpest of the detectives, and the officer best acquainted with the swell mob, had his pocket picked going home!

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How does the detective of to-day learn his job?

There is nothing haphazard about his training. No longer does he have to rely on his own powers of observation coupled with crumbs of advice thrown from more experienced men when time permits.

First—and without exception—he must take his preliminary training as a police constable at Peel House. Then, for two years, he must wear uniform and 'pad the hoof' on beat. After that, if he shows inclination and aptitude, he may be detailed for plain-clothes duty. He will work under the direction of a seasoned detective. If he is found competent and adaptable he will be interviewed and examined, finally accepted as a Detective Constable. Before long he will take a ten-week course at the Detective Training School at Hendon.

He will meet here his new 'Headmaster', Detective Superintendent L. Rundle, and if he fails to make the grade, it will be through no fault of the School or its Superintendent.

Mr. Rundle is a police officer with thirty-two years' experience in the Force and the King's Police Medal to mark the value of his services. His enthusiasm glows as brightly to-day as it did when he first took the oath and put on uniform as a young constable.

Of his present post he says: "I am thankful that I can pass on the result of many years' experience and not take it with me useless into retirement.

"They have a better chance than I did," he adds. "My training was two hours a day for six weeks, given by a Chief Inspector."

There are four Detective Schools in England, and they were set up

as a result of the findings of a Home Office committee in 1935. An experimental course was held early in 1936 and attended by Detective Inspectors from all over the country with senior Officers as lecturers. The School at Hendon opened for regular training in May of 1936 with courses for Detective Constables, and in 1937 additional courses were arranged for Detectives of and above the rank of Sergeant. After closing for the war years, the School was reopened in October of 1945 to provide ten-week courses for both senior and junior officers.

While these courses are provided only for detectives, the students are not drawn only from the Metropolitan Police Force, nor indeed only from England. Among those who have recently passed through Superintendent Rundle's hands are men from Siam, Guiana, Trans-Jordan (an Arab officer), Australia, India, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Trinidad, Iceland, and Canada.

At least one member of the Federal Bureau of Investigation has been a student, and a Texas Ranger is shortly expected.

Experts of the highest order are on the staff of visiting lecturers, each man a specialist in his own line.

What subjects must a detective study?

It must be remembered that he has already learnt the groundwork during his basic training and his two-year period as a uniformed officer. A brief survey of the syllabus gives some idea of the range of knowledge from which an efficient detective will have from time to time to draw.

The course is opened by the Assistant Commissioner (C.I.D.) of the Metropolitan Police, and Superintendent Rundle himself takes classes on subjects to which he can bring specialized knowledge—outstanding among them Cheque Thieves and Forgers, a fraternity with which Mr. Rundle has had many dealings. From Mr. T. MacD. Baker, Solicitor to the Metropolitan Police, the students learn about Criminal Law, Definition of Crime, and Criminal Liability and Limitations. Mr. G. Roche Lynch, of St. Mary's Hospital, London, lectures on toxicology and the Significance of Blood in Criminal Investigation. The Director of the Yard's Laboratories, Dr. H. S. Holden, speaks on his own subjects, among them the Laboratory in Criminal Investigation, and Dust, Dirt, and Debris.

Two other members of the Laboratory Staff contribute to the Course. Dr. G. E. Turfitt describes how the Laboratory can help in cases of Breaking and Entering, Larceny, and in offences resulting from careless, reckless, or dangerous driving. Chief Inspector C. R. M. Cuthbert deals with that vital subject, examination of the Scene of the Crime, as well as with Jewellery and Precious Stones, Foot Prints, the important points of Searching, Packing, and Labelling Exhibits, and Homicide.

A Staff Lecturer of great practical experience is Detective Inspector Colin MacDougall, and among the subjects with which he deals are Interrogations and Judges' Rules, Methods of Identification, Safe-

breaking, Robbery, and Sex Offences. An outside authority, Mr. Emory Chubb, the famous lock and safe specialist, also visits the School.

Gunshot Wounds, a subject of great importance, especially in homicide cases, is discussed by Dr. C. Keith Simpson, of Guy's Hospital, London. Dr. W. R. Harrison, Director of the Forensic Science Laboratory, Cardiff, discusses Handwriting, Printing, and Typing. Dr. John F. Taylor, Senior Pathologist at St. George's Hospital, London, contributes the Pathologist and the Police Officer, while Dr. H. E. Watts, H.M. Chief Inspector of Explosives, Home Office, deals with his own subject. Fire, Arson, and Spontaneous Combustion has another outside expert in Dr. J. B. Firth, Director of the North Western Forensic Science Laboratory, Preston.

Mr. G. R. Paling, Assistant Director of Public Prosecutions, personally conducts the class in the work of his Office; Mr. John Williams and Mr. M. I. Graham of the Metropolitan Police Solicitor's Department, speak on Evidence and Court Procedure; and Mr. W. C. Sharpe of the same Department, discusses Recent Judicial Decisions.

Altogether there are 260 periods in the ten-week course, some of which are spent in visits to the various Departments of the Metropolitan Police so that the Detective Officers may be familiar with the working of the whole intricate machine.

Among other subjects which are explained by Yard Officers are Powers of Arrest, Personal Descriptions, Confidence Tricksters and Sharepushers, Elementary and Practical Sketching, Aliens, Extradition and Fugitive Offenders, Dangerous Drugs (Detective Inspector C. C. Owen); Informants—their Uses and Abuses, Local Thieves, Observation on Suspected Persons, Searching Persons and Premises, Conspiracy, Personal and Perennial Swindles, Coiners and Coinage Offences, Bribery and Corruption, Wounding and Assaults, the Work of the Flying Squad (Detective Inspector C. G. Green); Company and Commercial Frauds and Fraudulent Bankrupts (Detective Inspector A. Griffin); Communications, Agility and Express Schemes and the Use of Card in Crime (Chief Inspector P. Roman); Warrants and Summonses, Dealings with the Press, Forged Stamps, Passports, and Forgery Acts, Pawnbrokers, Bank Note and Post Office Inquiries, Arson and Malicious Damage, Habitual Criminals (Detective Inspector A. Webb); Crime Records (Detective Inspector A. S. G. Crayfours, Criminal Record Office); Finger-prints and Care of Exhibits (Detective Inspector J. Livings, Finger-print Department); Detective Work at Race Meetings (Detective Inspector L. Crawford); Forged Bank Notes (Detective Inspector P. B. Burney); Homicide—Law and Police Action (Chief Inspector W. Chapman, C.I.D.); Photography in Police Work (Detective Inspector P. Law, Photographic Department); Fire-arms (Detective Inspector H. G. F. Bantock, Birmingham City Police); European Police Forces (Detective Superintendent G. Hatherhill, M.B.E.); Interesting Cases and How Investigated (Detective Superintendent E. Greeno); Borstal Training

(Mr. R. L. Bradley, Assistant Prison Commissioner, Home Office); Treason, Sedition, Official Secrets (Chief Inspector E. R. Jones, Special Branch); Courts of Assize and Quarter Sessions (Mr. R. L. Jackson, Secretary to the Metropolitan Police); Convicts on Licence (Detective Inspector T. R. Jones, Criminal Record Office); Method of Registration (Detective Inspector F. Barnes).

Deputy Commander (Crime) W. B. Rawlings, M.C., addresses the students on Leadership, Supervision, and Administration.

The final oral examination is conducted by Commander (Crime) H. Young, C.B.E.

Many of the names have become familiar to the public through famous cases: every man is an expert with long practical experience behind him.

Even this does not exhaust the list of subjects which the Detective Officer must study. He is not, however, expected to be an expert in them all; what he must learn is how far he can rely on the help of experts and how far he must depend on his own judgment and observation.

To aid the work of the school there is attached a museum where the exhibits are never allowed to grow dusty and where new shelves are constantly being added.

Many of the exhibits are implements and instruments actually used by criminals, from the traditional jemmy to a simple and ingenious device (which it would certainly not be in the public interest to describe!) for opening 'safety' locks.

The collection of weapons dates back almost to the time of Dick Turpin the highwayman, and it includes also the most up-to-date fire-arms, among which are weapons improvised from articles sold as harmless toys.

Simple articles can be, and often are, put to criminal uses. A tobacco tin, an alarm clock and a torch battery are the main ingredients of a bomb.

Examples of the coiner's and forger's art are prominently displayed, notes, petrol coupons and Insurance stamps among them. These yield their secrets to the Yard Laboratories, though Superintendent Rundle points out that the surest way to detect a forged note is to compare it with the genuine article. Skilful as are the imitations, they all show some discrepancy that becomes obvious on comparison.

There is a section which houses specimens of nails and candle-wicks. While these all appear identical to the casual observer, expert examination reveals differences by which the manufacturers may be identified.

Another section contains a railway 'chair' placed on the line by a would-be train wrecker. The man was caught and convicted by dust and rust from the 'chair' which was found on his clothing.

Clothing subjected to gun-fire from various distances is also displayed. Knowledge of its appearance will enable a detective to decide

quickly whether the fatal shot was fired from a distance that would instantly rule out suicide.

There are samples of precious stones to familiarize the student with the appearance of valuable jewellery, and of explosives and dangerous drugs for a similar purpose. To ensure familiarity there is a grim pile of bones in one corner. It is necessary that the detective should instantly recognize human remains. A grisly relic preserved in spirit is half an ear, once attached to a negro seaman. It was removed by the teeth of an assailant who was not unjustifiably charged with causing grievous bodily harm!

One of the skulls in the Museum was found in a garden. At first the commission of a serious crime was suspected, but expert examination discovered a tiny broken loop of wire in the top. It was an anatomical specimen abandoned by some medical student.

The detective must learn how to describe a wanted man and how to pass on his description so that another officer can build up a recognizable picture. This art—and it certainly is an art—can be acquired by constant practice and systematic observation. There are charts and diagrams in the Museum to guide the student. Ears alone may be divided into many classes according to size, thickness, position, presence or absence of lobe and angle at which they are set.

Superintendent Rundle recalls how as a young officer he was sent with a colleague to interrogate 'a small fellow with a pipe'. Armed with no more than this meagre description they set out for the Elephant and Castle district of London. And they found their man!

The secret, probably, is that their training had enabled them to see something more than a small fellow with a pipe. Every small fellow with a pipe was carefully watched and his gait and demeanour examined. A trained detective knows subconsciously the behaviour of a man with something on his mind.

Yet another section of the Museum deals with tyre-marks and shows examples from every brand used in England, while adjoining it are samples of plaster casts taken from foot-prints. More than once the distinctive arrangement of nails in a boot has led the owner to the dock. Foot-prints as a means of identification can sometimes be misleading, however. It is not unknown for a criminal to 'borrow' a pair of shoes with the intention of laying a false trail. The astute detective will regard any invitingly obvious foot-print with suspicion. He will regard, too, with suspicion the man who can account for every minute of his time on the date—perhaps a month or more back—when a crime has been committed. Such memory savours of careful rehearsal against interrogation. Sometimes the alibi can be upset very simply.

"You've got a wonderful memory," exclaims the detective in admiration. "Now tell me exactly all you did, say, last night."

And very few people can without considerable thought.

Another important section of the Museum displays blood marks

on wallpaper. The shape of the spot sometimes indicates the direction from which it struck the wall and can disprove a suspect's glib explanation.

In the Casserley homicide case blood-splashes on the wall showed an upward direction, enabling Divisional Detective Inspector (now retired) Jack Henry to deduce that a weapon had been used and that the blood had been thrown off by the upward stroke.

"Taking it all round," says Mr. Rundle, "the real detective is no Sherlock Holmes, but he is a man with all the patience and thoroughness in the world."

Mr. Rundle believes in the employment of women detectives, some of whom have been through his hands at the School. In the matter of disguise they have an enormous advantage.

"Give a woman detective a shopping-bag and she's disguised at once," he says.



THE MOUNTED BRANCH

Why horses?

There is more than one answer, but one very good answer is that there are occasions when the Mounted Branch can prevent the development of an ugly situation more effectively than any other means. The presence of forty trained men on forty trained horses in a side street has often convinced a crowd that there is really nothing to be gained by unruly demonstration.

There is something good-humoured, dignified, and *human* about the Mounted Branch. Londoners are exceedingly proud of it, and a London crowd will disperse quietly rather than feel it has let the Branch down.

Men of the Branch are trained and equipped for action, but they believe with the rest of the Force that prevention is better than cure.

But crowds do not always assemble with menacing intent, and when a crowd of Londoners gathers to enjoy itself, the Mounted Branch really comes into its own. No public procession would be considered complete without some of the 242 horses belonging to the Branch.

Recruiting is from the ranks of the Force, and every member has first undergone his basic training at Peel House and spent two years as an ordinary police constable. Since no extra pay is granted to the Mounted men, every member is a volunteer and an enthusiast.

The horses are not bred by the Police, but purchased, mostly from Yorkshire, as three- or four-year-olds, preference being given for those that are unbroken. As a rule they are a good thoroughbred-hunter cross, agile, well but not heavily built, and lacking the excitable temperament that the pure thoroughbred possesses.

Both horses and men go to Imber Court, in the county of Surrey and close to the River Thames, for training.

Imber Court was formerly the county home of the Onslow family, and has extensive grounds, some of which are used for Police Sports Clubs.

The old Bow Street mounted patrols laid the foundations of the Mounted Branch. Their foot comrades were absorbed in the new police in 1829, and the horse patrol became the Mounted Branch of the Metropolitan Police seven years later.

Training for both men and horses takes about six months, and for both it is equally stiff. By gentle degrees the horse is trained to feel the bit, to feel the rider, and finally to behave with the dignity and restraint that becomes a member of a crack organization. There must be no casualties in a crowd, happy or ugly, caused by a horse taking fright, and part of the training consists of flourishing 'teasers', streamers, and rattles under the horse's nose. All these torments he will have to endure when he goes into action.

Since an important part of his duties will consist of keeping back crowds along a procession route, he must learn to do so firmly but gently with his flanks, resisting the temptation to kick out. First, he must learn to back at a touch of the rein, then, with straw-stuffed dummies, he will begin to learn the feel of crowds pushing beside and behind him. When he leaves the School, fully trained, it will take more than Hitler's blitzkreig to unnerve him.

When raids first broke on England's capital some anxiety was felt as to how the police horses would react to the noise of bombs and gunfire. To allay any alarm, orders were given that oats should be served to each horse as soon as an Alert was sounded. The frequency of these and the scarcity of oats caused the practice to be discontinued. The horses, quite unperturbed by the noise, protested vigorously against the non-appearance of the extra rations, and the Alert became a signal for a chorus of indignant neighs.

One horse was killed in the blitz, another was awarded the Dickin Medal¹ for devotion to duty during raids.

The service life of a police horse is ten to fifteen years—occasionally longer. When the horse is too old for useful work it is humanely destroyed. The Mounted men love their horses and have no wish for them to pass into unscrupulous or cruel hands.

This is understandable when one realizes that horse and rider keep together, often enough for the whole of the horse's service. There is real understanding and comradeship between the two, and an intense pride on the part of the man to keep his mount in the pink of condition.

"What is the best way to keep your harness clean?" the trainees are asked.

¹ Awarded by the People's Dispensary for Sick Animals and presented by Miss Dickin.

The answer is: "Keep the horse groomed."

Rations for police horses consist of a daily allowance of 5 lb. of bruised oats, 1 lb. bran, 8 lb. straw, with the addition of $\frac{1}{2}$ pint of linseed each week.

The Mounted man is armed with nothing more formidable than two truncheons, long and short. The long truncheon is sheathed in a leather case and sometimes mistaken by foreign visitors for a sword. The two leather wallets contain first-aid kit, hoof-pick, and waterproof saddle-cover.

Police riders are a popular feature at the International Horse Show at Olympia, at the Richmond Horse Show, and at other mounted events. Their displays of horsemanship are but a reflection of their efficiency for service and not the object of their training.

"For handling crowds," declares Chief Inspector Mason, "there's nothing like the Mounted Branch."

It will be a sad day for the Metropolitan Police, and for Londoners, if the Mounted Branch is ever mechanized.

POLICING THE RAILWAYS

THE work of the Railway Police receives little publicity—far less than it deserves.

The Railway Forces have to protect property in circumstances which render it particularly vulnerable to theft, and some of the cleverest thieves devote their attentions exclusively to luggage and goods in transit on the four great railway systems.¹

During 1946 the Railway Police prosecuted in 22,856 cases, of which 8,119 were for felony, closely followed by fraudulent travel with 7,530 cases.

History.

The Industrial Revolution and the enormous increase in manufactured goods quickly rendered the roads of England inadequate for transport.

The first attempt to cope with the new situation was the construction of canals, and for these armies of labourers were recruited from unemployed agricultural labourers, both English and Irish. The development of the steam engine overlapped the work on canals and the labourers were diverted in increasing numbers to this new work.

These labourers, or 'navigators' (abbreviated to the now familiar 'navvy'), were a rough crowd, illiterate and quarrelsome. Few amenities were provided for them beyond inns and taverns (most of the present railway inns date from the period), and it is not surprising that breaches of the peace were frequent. Often enough the military were called out to quell fights between the English and the Irish, since the civil police, especially in rural areas, were quite inadequate to deal with them. Before long, villages and towns along the projected railway routes were petitioning the Home Secretary for protection.

The Railway Companies themselves soon found a need for protection of their property and equipment, and in 1835 the Great Western Railway obtained statutory powers to appoint police. Similar powers were granted to the Manchester and Leeds Railway and the York and North Midland Railway in the following year.

In 1838 Parliament passed a general Act 'for the payment of Constables for Keeping the Peace near Public Works'.

The preamble to this Act gives an indication of the necessity of

¹ Now British Railways.

appointing constables to maintain law and order upon railway property and it reads:

Whereas great mischiefs have arisen by the outrageous behaviour of labourers and others employed on the railroads, canals and other public works, by reason whereof the appointment of special constables is often necessary for keeping the peace, and for the protection of the inhabitants and the security of the property in the neighbourhood of such public works, whereby great expenses have been cast upon the public rates of counties and other districts chargeable with such expenses be it enacted . . .

The caption to Section I of this Act reads:

Whenever the appointment of special constables has been occasioned by the behaviour of persons employed upon public works, the expenses thereof shall be paid by the companies carrying on such works.

The section shows that if complaint was made on oath by three credible witnesses of the conduct of persons employed upon any railway, the justices could charge the railway companies with the expenses of any special constable employed to keep law and order.

Between 1838 and 1924 many Special Railway Acts and Public Acts were passed dealing with the appointment and Powers of Police upon railways, and nearly every Special Act authorizing the construction of a railway contained a section giving that railway power to employ constables.

In the early days of the railways the Railway Constable was a very important member of the staff with duties that extended far beyond keeping the peace. The first trains were controlled by the hand-signals of constables much as the policeman of to-day controls road traffic, and in some districts signalmen are still referred to as 'Bobbies' or 'Officers'.

Regulations of the Great Western Railway, published in 1841, indicate the scope of the constable's work:

The duties of the Police may be stated generally to consist in the preservation of order in all the stations and on the line of railway. They are to give and receive signals; to keep the line free from casual or wilful obstruction; to assist in case of accidents; to caution strangers of danger on the railway; to remove intruders of all descriptions; to superintend and manage the crossings or switches; to give notice of arrivals or departures; to direct persons into the entrances to the stations or sheds; to watch movements of embankments or cuttings; to inspect the rails and the solidity of the timber; to guard and watch the Company's premises and to convey the earliest information on every subject to their appointed station or superior officer.

In early days the railway line was divided into beats and the whole line was patrolled, but with spread of railways and development of County Police Forces this became unnecessary, and Railway Police were concentrated at important railway centres.

Early constables wore a uniform very similar to that of the Metropolitan Police (founded 1839). They wore an 'on duty' armlet and carried a staff of office with crown and crest of the railway company. The inspector carried a short hollow baton which contained his warrant of authority.

With the growth of railways and development of commerce merchandise began to pass over railways in an ever-increasing stream, and thieves soon saw their opportunity. Criminals also used railways to travel to areas where there was an inefficient police system or no system at all.

Extensive thieving of railway property soon led authorities to organize detective departments. As early as 1845 several gangs of luggage thieves were arrested at London termini; in 1848 the Eastern Counties Railway lost seventy-six articles of luggage in one day; and in 1849 six leading railway companies lost £100,000 worth of property in a year.

In some cases the detective department worked separately from the uniformed branch and was directed by a separate chief officer. In other instances the uniformed and detective branches were controlled by the same chief. The Chief Officer was usually known as the 'Superintendent of Police'. In many of the Railway Forces the title was changed, before World War I, to 'Chief of Police'.

During their history Railway Police figured in many sensational cases—John Tawell, 'Man in the Quaker Hat', 1845 (G.W.R.); Franz Muller—first railway murder in 1864 (Tilbury and Southend Railway); Percy Gold, 1881—murdered between London Bridge and Preston Park (L.B. and S.C. Railway); John Dickman, 1910, murdered cashier near Newcastle (N.E. Railway); Willie Starchfield, murdered in 1914 (G.E. Railway).

Later Development.

Between 1900 and World War I Railway Police Forces increased in strength and efficiency. Organization began to take its present form.

Following the amalgamation of railways in 1921 the Forces were completely reorganized, and many Dock Police Forces were absorbed by the Railway Forces.

To-day the four main line railway companies and the London Passenger Transport Board¹ have statutory powers to appoint constables to maintain order and restrain the commission of crimes on their systems.

They nominate candidates who are appointed by any two justices or one Stipendiary or Metropolitan Police Magistrate, and the Constable

¹ All now nationalized.

takes an oath of allegiance to the King before the Justice by whom he is appointed. After appointment he has all the powers and protection and privileges of a constable in respect of the exercise of his duties.

Scope of Railway Police.

The Railway Constable can exercise his authority on all railway property authorized by Act of Parliament, and on any railway property worked jointly with another railway.

He can act in the immediate vicinity of railway property. (The extent of vicinity is not defined except in the case of the Great Western Railway Police who can act up to within half a mile of railway property.) He has power to follow and arrest any person off railway property for any offence for which he might have been arrested whilst on railway property.

Before he can exercise his authority the constable must be in uniform, or in possession of a warrant card signed by the appointing Justice.

Railway Police School.

In the latter years of the war the Chiefs of Police of the four main line railway companies gave serious consideration to the question of training of post-war Railway Police recruits.

The increase of crime on railways indicated the need for increased efficiency in the Railway Police Forces, and the establishment of a training school was recommended to the Railway Executive Committee. Accordingly, officers of wide experience were selected as potential instructors and attended the Home Office courses at Peel House.

Inquiry was made to find suitable premises for the training school, and as the Railway Police are distributed throughout England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, it was essential that the school should be fully residential. Recently premises have been acquired at St. Cross, Walton-on-the-Hill, Surrey, which had been built and used as a boys' school. They comprise a well-appointed building standing in twelve acres of ground, football and cricket pitches, hard tennis court, and outdoor swimming pool. This new school will shortly be ready for occupation.

In the meantime the need to commence training of the growing number of recruits was urgent, and since December, 1946, training has been carried out at a temporary accommodation provided by the L.M.S. at Euston House, N.W.1.

Training includes Police Law, Physical Training, and Self-Defence, English (report writing), Demonstration Crimes, and Demonstration Courts, talks by experts on the various phases of railway operating, including parcels offices, goods traffic, and booking offices. Visits are made to police-stations and courts. When the school is opened, swimming and life-saving will be included.

The Commandant is Mr. G. V. Frankton, late of the Metropolitan

Police, who was for some years in charge of the Metropolitan Police Training School at Peel House, and he is assisted by Chief Inspector Brewer, Southern Railway Police, who is Deputy Commandant, and a staff of senior Railway Police officers of wide experience.

When in full operation the training school will be residential and the initial training period for recruits will be ten weeks.

Co-operation with Scotland Yard.

The co-operation of the Railway Police with Scotland Yard, and indeed with every Police Force over whose territory the railways pass, is both close and satisfactory.

At the present time the most serious and widespread criminal activity on the railway is theft, due largely to the shortage of goods in great demand (e.g. whisky, tobacco, footwear, clothing, and hosiery) and partly to the general decline in moral standards which seems an inevitable concomitant of war.

Generally speaking, for every thief who operates on the railway there is a receiver in the adjoining police district. It therefore frequently happens that the arrest of a thief by the Railway Police leads to the arrest of a receiver by the Civil Police, and conversely the arrest of a receiver or the recovery of stolen property by the Civil Police is frequently followed by the arrest of the actual thief by the Railway Police.

The work of the Railway and Civil Forces is, therefore, often complementary and can only be carried out satisfactorily if there is complete harmony and understanding between the officers of the various forces.

The Scotland Yard Gazette and various police reports are received from the Metropolitan Police and West Riding Constabulary at all important centres where Railway Police are stationed, and as a result the Railway Police have been able to assist the local police in making arrests of persons wanted in connection with criminal offences. In addition, express police messages are also circulated to the Railway Police in connection with matters requiring the assistance of all police forces.

The Railway Police at Work.

During the early months of 1938 the police headquarters of the four main line railway companies were inundated with reports of suspected robberies from trains. Every case was identical in one respect; the victim was a lady passenger travelling first class and her jewel-box had been rifled and carefully replaced in its original position. Often the passenger had commenced her journey on one of the main railway systems, stayed the night in London and continued on another line the next day. Invariably the passenger was quite unaware of any loss until her luggage had been unpacked, and more often than not was unable to furnish any information as to when and where, or by whom, the

robbery had been committed; it might have been due to the dishonesty of servants at the owner's residence, on the trains, or at the hotel. Only one point was clear, the thief had had ample time to work.

After weeks of intensive investigation the railway detectives decided that the robberies occurred on the trains, by a 'lone wolf', and that he lived in or near London where the field of operations had its centre. From that moment every available detective concentrated on the London termini. The circumstances of each robbery had been carefully examined and the salient features collated and compared with previous characteristics until ultimately a description of the suspect was pieced together and his *modus operandi* exposed.

The wanted man was about twenty-five years of age with a slight moustache and brown hair well brushed back, obviously well-educated with a cultured voice, always immaculately dressed, generally in an Air Force blue lounge suit. Usually he carried an umbrella and a bundle of newspapers or a book under his arm and always wore a red carnation in his button-hole. He travelled first class and operated only on trains with restaurant cars. He made a point of selecting compartments occupied by a lady passenger travelling alone, and based his plans on the chance of the passenger taking a meal *en route* and leaving him alone with her luggage. As a rule, by the time the passenger returned he had disappeared with the contents of her jewel-case to another part of the train.

In early May a £1,000 jewel robbery was reported on the G.W.R. between Shrewsbury and Paddington. The next robbery occurred on the L. & N.E.R., when a lady reported that her jewel-case had been rifled to the extent of £1,500 while she was at lunch between King's Cross and York.

For some time there was a lull; then in October he was spotted at Paddington where he purchased a first-class ticket to Oxford and at the last minute jumped into the last coach of the 11.15 a.m. restaurant train to the Midlands. The thief did not know that this was a slip coach nor did he know that it was not connected by gangway with the main train. In joining the slip coach he made the first mistake of his criminal career—and one which was to cost him his liberty. For the first time the railway detectives were a jump ahead—they knew the coach would be slipped at Didcot and guessed that in the meantime the suspect would realize his mistake and make for the nearest point where he could join a restaurant train. The detectives down the line were forewarned and from this moment his movements were under constant observation. From Didcot he travelled by a local train to Swindon where he joined the first train, with restaurant car attached, back to Paddington.

As usual, he selected a compartment occupied by one lady passenger who shortly after left for the luncheon car, leaving him alone with her luggage. So far his method had worked according to plan but on this occasion he was not quite alone. A detective was near enough to observe at the appropriate moment, that the lady's suit-case in the rack was in

not quite the same position as it was when the owner had left it. Only one person could have disturbed it. At long last the game was up and the thief, still wearing the red carnation, was caught red-handed with £300 worth of jewellery in his pocket. In the preceding nine months he had stolen jewellery valued at:

£6,000 from L.M.S. passengers

£2,157 „ S.R. „

£1,673 „ G.W.R. „

£1,530 „ L.N.E.R. „

and at his trial, where he was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment, he pleaded guilty to twenty-six robberies. Although he had broken up most of the jewellery and had it remodelled before disposing of it, the police eventually recovered property worth £3,500. His capture had been brought about by the exhaustive and efficient investigations of the combined main line Railway Police whose clever detective work had relieved society of the most troublesome train thief for a generation.

'Flying Squad' in Action.

Some years ago a number of mysterious thefts of luggage and parcels on long-distance expresses, to and from London, set the Railway Police a problem which took them many months of hard and patient observations to solve. The losses had become so serious that the aid of the Railway Police 'Flying Squad' was sought.

On one occasion a guard in charge of an express parcels train from London to the North of England, on arrival at Birmingham was handed, by a member of the Station Staff, an insured parcel containing a large number of valuable gold rings for transit to Liverpool. He signed for this package, and placed it in a wire cage in his brake-van. On arrival at Crewe, during the early hours of the morning, he went about his duties in the van sorting parcels. He did not leave the van whilst the train stood in the station, and immediately it departed he saw to his surprise that the parcel of rings had disappeared. The police eventually submitted him to very close interrogation. He assured them that no one had travelled with him, and furthermore no person had entered his van whilst the train stood at Crewe. The guard was an old and trusted servant, but the officers unfortunately came to no other conclusion than that he had some knowledge of the disappearance of the rings, and for the time being the theft was filed as an unsolved mystery.

Shortly after this occurrence, a wealthy lady travelled by a midday express from Euston, and her dressing-case with other luggage was placed in the front guard's van, the corridor door of which was securely locked. When the train arrived at its destination the lady took possession of her dressing-case, which was still locked, and upon reaching her hotel

found that all her jewellery, worth about £1,000, had disappeared. Enquiries were immediately made by Railway Flying Squad Officers, who satisfied themselves that no member of the train crew had entered the van, the door of which was still locked when it reached its destination, and the guard in charge had travelled at the rear of the train.

Happenings of this character occurred on expresses every week or so, and thousands of pounds' worth of jewellery from luggage, and valuable parcels from the parcels' trains continued mysteriously to disappear. In addition to the guard who lost the parcel of rings, other members of the railway staff, of many years' service and well trusted, came under suspicion.

A short time prior to this period of events, a Dane arrived in this country from Copenhagen, armed with credentials and references of the highest order. His maternal grandfather was a member of the Danish aristocracy, and he got into touch with influential persons in this country, ultimately reaching the general manager of a railway, who was so impressed with his upbringing and credentials, that he was at once appointed to a position of Outdoor Assistant to the Superintendent of the Line. He then held a first-class pass, which enabled him to travel in any of the trains, either passenger or parcels, throughout the whole of the railway system. Part of his duties was to ensure that parcels' trains, and the traffic they carried, were given transit without undue delay. He became known to many of the Railway Operating Staff, who, believing he was in a very big position, gave him far more respect than he was entitled to, and they certainly did not suspect him of anything dishonest. His appointment had not been brought to the notice of the Railway Police, and for some time he was an unknown quantity so far as they were concerned.

Two inspectors of the Railway Flying Squad travelled on many express passenger and parcels' trains, often in concealment, but nothing suspicious occurred, until one day several months later when one of the officers happened to be in a London to Manchester express. In the centre of the train was a luggage van with its corridor doors locked. On the journey a well-dressed man, carrying a leather brief case, was seen to unlock the door of the van, go inside, and relock the door. The officer watched through the keyhole, and to his surprise the man produced a bunch of some thirty or forty luggage keys. With these he unlocked several cases, turned over the contents of each, and carefully relocked them. This man was followed, and the police then very quickly established that he was no other than the Dane with the high references.

A few days later it was learned that he was about to spend a fortnight's holiday in Devon. He was followed, and he stayed at a good class hotel with a woman. The officer kept observation on them day after day, but apart from spending money lavishly, nothing came to notice which would enable an immediate arrest to be made.

After his holiday, the two inspectors commenced a long and tedious

period of observations upon him. They ascertained he was living in a residential club in London, and during his leisure moments was associating not only with high society, but with women of easy virtue.

One night the police saw him join a parcels' train at Willesden for Crewe. They were able to reach Crewe before the train, and when it did arrive at that point, they saw the Dane alight carrying a suit-case on which were his own initials. The officers, for the time being, were of opinion that it was his own property in view of the initials, and they allowed him to proceed.

For a whole week the two officers followed their suspect from London to Carlisle and back daily. Neither they nor the Dane went to bed during that period. During his brief visits to London he was seen to visit various women at their flats.

Eventually, discreet enquiries were made at his club, and information obtained that he had certain articles in his bedroom.

On the Saturday evening of that week he left his club in full evening-dress and went by taxi to a ball in the West End. *Everything he wore, down to the dressing on his hair, had been stolen.* The Railway Police Officers, accompanied by an officer of the Metropolitan C.I.D., searched his bedroom. There they found articles valued at over three thousand pounds, ranging from infants' vests to fire-arms, and from fur coats to cigarettes. Among the many pieces of jewellery were ninety gold rings, later identified as part of the contents of the insured parcel stolen from the guard's van at Crewe many months before. The guard remembered seeing the Dane, but knew him as a high official and considered him above suspicion.

In the bedroom was also found evidence that the Dane was a drug addict—a fact that had enabled him to carry on for long periods without sleep to the discomfort of the officers following him.

After his arrest the officers travelled the country collecting underwear, furs, and jewellery from women to each of whom he had sworn devotion.

When arrested he made a long statement admitting the thefts. He was sentenced to a stiff term of imprisonment and ordered to be deported.

By his bedside at the time of his arrest was a book, *Was he Guilty?* The perseverance of the Railway Police proved that he was!



A DIFFICULT CASE

When a case of theft is reported to the Metropolitan Police or to one of the Provincial Forces, there is usually no doubt *where* it occurred. Thefts reported to the Railway Police may have occurred anywhere in the country, and the first problem is to ascertain where the theft occurred before any further action can be taken. Sometimes this calls for months of enquiries and observations.

Recently thefts of packages from traffic in transit set the Railway Police a difficult problem, and it was a long time before they could reach a decision that the packages were being stolen from a London station. Even then it was difficult to make out a case, because there was no apparent indication which of thousands of packages had been marked down for stealing.

At last the detectives had reason to be interested in a certain package which they traced to its destination—which proved to be correct. Still not satisfied, the officers continued to keep observation and followed another package, suspected of being stolen, to a North London address. Then they transferred their attentions to a servant of the company who appeared interested in certain packages. Each of these was followed to the address it bore, and each address proved later to be merely an accommodation address. At last the gang was rounded up and their ingenious method revealed. Labels exactly similar to the original labels had been forged and filled in with consignment addresses by the thieves. The goods were then delivered by the company in the normal course, but they were delivered to addresses selected by the gang and not to those for which they were originally intended. One of the company's servants when arrested had in his possession nearly two hundred false labels bearing the stamps of well-known firms.



VANISHED CLOTHING

One of the most interesting and successful cases of recent years resulted in the arrest and conviction of a gang of ten thieves—nine men and a woman.

In March of 1945 a consignment of twelve cartons of woollen goods, mainly women's and children's clothing, was consigned from wholesalers in Glasgow to their Manchester branch. The cartons were checked into a wagon at Glasgow—only one carton reached Manchester.

The usual extensive police enquiries followed, and early in April officers visited a small town in Cumberland where they interviewed a large number of housewives. Several of them, it transpired, had bought articles similar to those stolen, from travelling hawkers. Further enquiries seemed to implicate a gang of hawkers who travelled the country. Warrants were granted and by the end of May the nine men had been arrested. The woman was traced in June.

None of the defendants was willing to assist in tracing the stolen goods, but with the co-operation of various civil police forces it was discovered that the gang was also responsible for the theft of fourteen

bales of boiler suits, carpets, clothing, and other goods to a value of nearly £1,500.

All ten were found guilty of one or more charges of larceny, and sentences ranged from twelve months' imprisonment to fines of, in one case, £200.

This case was typical of the difficulties which face the Railway Police, and of their persistence in tackling them. In the first place all that was known was that the eleven cartons had disappeared somewhere between Glasgow and Manchester. Methodical and painstaking enquiries led the officers to the small Cumberland town where the discovery that a housewife had purchased one or two garments from a hawker finally resulted in the arrest of a dangerous and well-organized gang of thieves.



AN ERROR IN SPELLING

Of all the crimes which the Railway Police are called upon to deal with, those involving servants of the company are the hardest to detect. The vast and complicated system of checking, recording, and carrying goods works with complete satisfaction—provided the men and women who work it are honest and reliable. And with very few exceptions they are. When cases of dishonesty do occur, it is in the interests of all those on whom suspicion may unjustly fall to have the matter cleared up with as little delay as possible.

Usually it is a simple mistake on the part of the dishonest servant that finally gives him away, and in the case that follows an error in spelling resulted in the disclosure of an ingenious plot to steal goods in transit.

Heavy claims for losses were being made on the L.M.S. Railway during 1942, and the police were for a long time unable to trace the method of theft. Whole packages were disappearing in transit, among them underclothing and precious silk stockings.

Information was received by the police that stockings were being offered for sale by a firm in the North, and that these stockings were similar to those stolen. There was a record of the goods having been received for dispatch, but no record of the goods arriving could be traced although the invoice arrived. It often happens that goods are received without invoice, and the practice is for the checker at the receiving station to make out an 'unentered' note, copying the particulars from the package. In this case the police had to examine a vast quantity of such notes in order to confirm their own theories.

These revealed that several packages had been delivered to 'A' at an address which proved to be an accommodation address. The police called at this address and found a package awaiting collection. The

original label had been covered by another on which was written 'Carriage *Foward*'. Suspicion fell on a certain goods checker, who strenuously denied having written the labels. Enquiries were made among members of the man's family, and his sixteen-year-old daughter was asked to write the word 'Forward'. She wrote 'Foward'. When further questioned she admitted writing the labels at her father's dictation.

Although the police could prove that packages had been wrongfully delivered to 'A' and another individual, it was still impossible to bring a charge, since there was no means of knowing what the parcels had contained. Eventually, however, stolen goods were traced to a third party, and eventually six people were charged with various offences of stealing, receiving, and conspiracy. 'A' was sentenced to fifteen months' hard labour for receiving and twelve months' for conspiracy. The checker received nine months' for stealing and six for conspiracy. Two other of the defendants were bound over on charges of receiving, and the other two discharged.



A MYSTERY SOLVED

For many years there had been serious trouble at the L.M.S. locomotive sheds at a big depot. Between 1942 and 1945 no less than nineteen engines, left unattended under steam, ran away, causing serious damage and, in one case, personal injury.

This was at time when every engine and every piece of rolling stock was vital to the war effort.

In March of 1945, Mr. W. B. Richards, Chief of the L.M.S. Police instructed Chief Inspector Benyon (now Superintendent) and Detective Inspector Garner to give their time exclusively to solving the mystery.

Hundreds of men and women were questioned, a substantial reward was offered for information, but all without result.

The two officers decided that they could only find a solution by making a list of everyone who could have been responsible, and then eliminating one by one those who proved their innocence. There were 1,748 people employed in the sheds, and, in addition, many drivers and firemen from other depots had to visit the sheds from time to time. It was no easy task that they had been set.

It was necessary for a start to check the duty hours of each man in order to discover who was on duty at the time an engine ran away.

At last, after weeks of patient checking and cross-checking, they were able to show that one driver had been on duty *and in the vicinity* each time an engine was interfered with. Here was cause for suspicion but certainly no proof, especially as the driver had been some distance away at the actual time the engine started its runaway journey. However, the officers knew that a qualified driver could set the controls before

the engine had sufficient steam to move, so that he could be well away from the scene when pressure was sufficient to start it.

There was only one way to make a case, and that was to catch the culprit red-handed. For this it was necessary to have the help of someone who was himself a driver, and who would appreciate the meaning of any actions performed on the controls of an engine. They enlisted the services of a driver who was also a special constable and for weeks they watched their suspect every time he went on duty in the sheds. At last their patience was rewarded. Early one morning they took up their places in the sheds, and the Special examined every engine in the vicinity, reporting that each was correct—in middle gear, hand-brake on, cylinder cocks open, and regulator shut. In such a condition it would be quite impossible for the engine to run away without deliberate interference.

The suspect came in, got on his engine, and drove out of the shed. In a few minutes he was back and took a coal pick from another engine. A few minutes later he was back again. He remounted the second engine, glanced up and down the line from both sides of the cab, then made certain movements with his arms which to the experienced eye of the Special meant only one thing—he was tampering with the controls. Then he got down and hurried outside to his own engine. He was joined by his fireman and drove off. The Special followed while the two officers kept watch on the second engine. A quarter of an hour later the engine began to move. It ran some 280 yards, became derailed at the catch points and fouled the main line. Only a minute or so previously a passenger train had passed. When the engine was examined, it was found that the hand-brake was off, the regulator partly open, the cylinder cocks shut, and the engine in full backward gear.

The suspect was followed and tackled, but denied all knowledge of the occurrence.

On trial he again denied all knowledge, but the evidence was too much for him, and he was sentenced to five years' penal servitude.

Since the day of his arrest no more engines have run away at that depot.

The four great railway companies have between them a total of 3,778 police. The L.N.E.R. heads the list with 1,418, the L.M.S. has 1,252, the G.W.R. 600, and the S.R. 508. The respective strengths of the Criminal Investigation Departments are 305, 310, 138, and 77.

The L.N.E.R. has two Chiefs of Police, Lieut.-Colonel H. S. Cole (who is Chairman of the Railway Police Committee), at York, and Colonel N. McK. Jesper, D.S.O., O.B.E., M.C., at London. Mr. W. B. Richards, M.V.O., is Chief of the L.M.S.; Mr. A. Lane of the G.W.R.; and Mr. W. E. N. Growdon of the S.R.

LONDON TRANSPORT POLICE

The history of the London Passenger Transport Board's Force dates to the formation of the Board in 1933. Its foundation, however, rests on the amalgamation of the Police Forces of the various transport undertakings that formed the Board. These undertakings, in many instances, were as old as the Main Line Railway Companies, their Police Forces owed their existence to similar circumstances.

Some of the Acts of Parliament authorizing the construction of new lines, or amalgamation of existing Companies, contained a clause authorizing Magistrates, on the application of the Company, to appoint Special Constables. The railways of the Board, which were popularly known as the Underground Railways of London, each had its own Act for this purpose. These sections were repealed by Section 107 of the London Passenger Transport Act, 1934, which authorized the appointment of Constables with authority on all the Board's undertakings. In point of fact the powers conferred by this Act were very wide and for the first time, gave the constables certain powers in connection with the road services run by the Board with all the protection and privilege of a constable in the execution of his duty. The area covered by the Board, and consequently by the Act, extends from Letchworth in the north to Horsham in the south, and Aylesbury in the west to Gravesend and Brentwood in the east.

The organization of the Board's Police Force follows the plan of the Metropolitan and County Forces. At the head is the Chief of Police and his men are divided into uniform and plain-clothes staffs under the supervision of inspectors and sergeants. The principal duty of the uniform men is the patrolling of stations to prevent crime, the maintenance of order amongst passengers, the safeguarding of the Board's properties, and the protection of paymasters who journey with the considerable amounts of cash necessary to pay the staff's wages at the widely-scattered depots and stations.

London is, by tradition, the venue of all the largest functions that take place in the country such as public ceremonials, football and cricket matches, greyhound racing and exhibitions, and the Board's uniform police take a large part in controlling the vast crowds that congregate for such affairs, most of whom use the Board's vehicles as a means of reaching these events. Fortunately the Board's area is comparatively circumscribed and it is, therefore, quite an easy matter to concentrate the men where they are required. Their capabilities were severely tested on the occasion of the funeral of King George V and Coronation of his successor, and more recently on VE and VJ days and the Victoria Celebrations of June, 1946.

The plain-clothes staff, or C.I.D., are responsible for the detection and investigation of crime on the railways and road services of the

Board. These consist of nearly every crime in the calendar, not excluding murder, but the majority consist of offences such as larceny, assault, and infringement of by-laws, with the occasional landing of a 'big fish' for forgery, coining, and similar forms of crime.

Two instances of patient detective work in different spheres can be cited. In May, 1938, one of the paymasters, accompanied by a member of the staff, was carrying wages amounting to £1,400 from the safe in the Traffic Controller's office to the Signal Department at Earl's Court Station when he and his escort were violently assaulted and the money stolen. Examination of the scene showed that the robbery had been carefully planned and that the men had escaped by climbing some railings, by means of an oil drum previously placed there for the purpose. They had run through some gardens adjoining the station premises to a waiting car. In the darkness and the confusion it had not been possible for either man to get a glimpse of the thieves and there was practically nothing to work upon, but it was patent that the robbery had been committed by someone with local knowledge.

The attention of the investigating police officers was concentrated on past members of the Signal Engineer's staff who would, of course, be acquainted with the normal procedure of the paymaster. Dozens of ex-employees were traced and were able to satisfy the police officers of their movements on the night in question but, in this process, it can be imagined that a number of false trails were followed. One of the few men unaccounted for was an ex-guardsmen who had resided in the Victoria district but had disappeared from his usual haunts at about the time of the robbery. Diligent enquiry in cafés in the neighbourhood brought to light the information that he had been on terms of close intimacy with a girl whose Christian name only was known and it was rumoured that she was expecting a child by him.

This angle was followed up and, as a result of enquiry at numerous hospitals and maternity homes, the woman was traced. At that time she had not seen or heard from the man for some time, was feeling very bitter towards him, and quite ready to talk. When questioned she said she was alone in the apartments they occupied when he came in very late with two companions. She was, she said, roughly ordered into the adjoining bedroom and told to remain there. She heard talking and the sound of various movements about the room until the early hours when all the men left and she had not seen her paramour since. When asked if she had noticed anything unusual about the room she said that she saw that a quantity of paper had been burnt, but some pieces of yellowish tint were on the hearth. She readily identified one of the Board's standard pay envelopes as being made of similar paper.

The wanted man then made a great mistake. After some months of silence he wrote to the girl. The letter did not bear an address, but a postmark showed that it had come from one of the remoter villages in Scotland. Police officers were immediately despatched to the vicinity,

and local enquiries were made which showed that he had arrived a few days after the robbery and was apparently well supplied with money. He was arrested, confronted with the evidence that had been obtained, and made a statement admitting his participation in the robbery. His accomplices, fellow ex-guardsmen, were quickly traced and all brought to trial. At the Old Bailey in the following October they were sentenced to four, three, and two years' penal servitude respectively.

The second case concerns one of the happily rare instances of dishonesty amongst the Board's staff. During the usual sorting of used tickets it was noticed that some of the tickets issued at a certain station were about a quarter of an inch shorter than usual and did not bear a date. In isolated instances, and to the average ticket collector, this would not have excited comment as it would have been assumed that the machine from which the ticket was issued had developed a defect which caused the knife which separated the ticket from the roll to operate prematurely. Close examination of the tickets showed that the cut was oblique, which is practically an impossibility with the guillotine type of knife in the machine, and it was presumed that the dates had been removed for some purpose. As these tickets, all of one denomination and issued at the same station, were found in the collections at various stations the possibility of the date having been removed by a passenger was ruled out, and attention was directed to the assumption that two or more members of the staff were conspiring to reissue used tickets.

In the first place it was necessary to identify the booking-clerk issuing the mutilated tickets and this was done by testers purchasing tickets at the station until a mutilated ticket was issued. The next step was to isolate the collector who was receiving the tickets at the journey's end and giving them back to the clerk. This presented the first major difficulty, as all of the Board's railway tickets are known as 'scheme tickets' and are available at all stations within the limit of the fare paid. It was assumed, however, that two or more members of the staff would not enter into a conspiracy to defraud unless they were well acquainted by long association. Perusal of the clerk's staff record showed that for many years he had been on a certain line, and efforts were directed accordingly. Every one of the ticket collectors at the three stations concerned was handed a number of tickets and later the collection was checked. One man's collection was found to be short and later these tickets were recovered from another station—clear proof that they had been reissued.

To complete the chain of evidence it was necessary to prove the association of the two men, and this was done by shadowing them on and off duty until they were seen to meet. The collector was seen to hand the clerk a newspaper, folded but obviously containing something, on a Tube station platform. The last step was to purchase a number of tickets, hand them to the suspected collector and repurchase one of them from the suspected clerk, and this was also carried out. When

challenged, the pair confessed and were eventually sentenced to six months' imprisonment.

The Board, being solely concerned with the transport of passengers and not with goods, does not experience the difficulties that arise on the main lines from goods lost in transit. The comparatively small number of larcenies that occur, however, is more than off-set by the considerable number of passengers detected and convicted for fraudulent travelling. Before the Board was formed this was a matter for serious attention, but after its advent the problem was tackled from a different angle. New methods were employed in detection and the staff encouraged and strengthened. In consequence the number of convictions rose from just over 800 a year to a record total in 1946 of 5,568, and so far, in the present year, there is an increase of approximately 10 per cent. There is no question that this action has a deterrent effect, as the number of second convictions is infinitesimal, but there is little doubt that the number of convictions obtained will not lessen, rather the reverse, as new passengers take the place of the old ones.

Many and ingenious are the methods adopted by the fraudulent passengers to avoid paying the few pennies which comprise most of the fares on the Board's system and, whilst each person probably concludes that he or she has invented a new method, all are foredoomed to be detected sooner or later. The men who are specially allocated to this type of work are expert and always a step ahead of the passenger. One clever gentleman hit upon the plan of purchasing a season ticket for a short journey between two stations for which there was not a great demand. The destination stations were written in by the clerk and the passenger then affixed over the second station a name of a more distant one on a thin piece of paper almost the exact shade of the season ticket. The whole he inserted in a case with a rather thick celluloid cover, but he overlooked one point. He presented this fake ticket to an inspector who knew that tickets between the two stations at which it purported to be available had both destinations *printed*. The passenger was convicted and a very heavy penalty imposed.

Some passengers have gone to extraordinary lengths to avoid paying their fares, one man even went to the trouble of printing his own tickets, but it can safely be said that none of the methods has proved successful for long and the defaulters have paid the penalty.



SOME OTHER FORCES

London has several police forces in addition to those which have already been mentioned.

War Department Constabulary have the same organization, training,

and duties as other police, but are recruited exclusively from ex-soldiers or soldiers awaiting discharge.

Similarly the Royal Marine Police Force, with its personnel of 17 officers and 878 other ranks, is recruited from retired officers and pensioners of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Members of the Force are responsible for policing Royal dockyards and other Admiralty establishments.

A special force of Market Police operates in London's markets at Smithfield, Billingsgate, and Leadenhall. So far as its traditions are concerned, it is the oldest force of all, for the Greeks and the Romans employed market police. It was reorganized some few years before the war and consists of 'Extra' constables who are sworn in annually at the Guildhall on Plough Monday. They work under the Clerks of the Markets and their duty is to enforce by by-laws which may be in operation from time to time. They are in no way controlled by the City Police, although their uniform is similar, with the exception that there is no comb on the helmet.

Baby of London's Police is the force attached to British Overseas Airways Corporation.

THE CASE FOR THE CROWN

Author's Note.—The case given in this chapter is hypothetical, but individual points have been taken from actual cases, some of which are mentioned in other chapters. All dialogue is, of course, imaginary, and no reference is intended to any particular Police officer or criminal. Jurists may find flaws in the presentation of the case, but I have chosen this method in order to incorporate as many points of procedure and law as possible.—R.H.

THERE has been a burglary at a large house in London's West End. Serious as the crime of burglary is, this case has been raised to the most serious category because a servant, evidently attempting to hold the man or men and give the alarm, has been killed by a blow from some blunt instrument.

It is interesting at this stage to consider exactly what the crime of burglary consists of.

First, the crime must be committed between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., otherwise it is not burglary but house-breaking.

Second it must be committed in a *dwelling-house*—that is, a permanent structure which is occupied by a person or persons as *home*, though it may be empty at the time of the offence.

Third, there must be *breaking*, which does not legally require that any structure or fitting should be *smashed*. To raise a closed window is breaking, even though the window is unfastened, but to gain access by a partly open window or door is not breaking. It also meets the definition of the law if the burglar breaks *out* after he has committed the offence.

Fourth, there must be *entering*, and here again the law will be satisfied if a finger or even an instrument is inserted.

Finally, there must be intent to commit a felony, even if the felony is not accomplished, *at the time of breaking and entering*. It is not burglary if a man breaks and enters a dwelling-house in order to obtain a night's shelter, even if having entered he is tempted by some article inside and steals it. It might, however, be difficult to convince a jury that the intent was not originally felonious!

The crime of murder is one of the four crimes which under English Law still carry the death penalty.* The others are: treason, piracy with violence, and setting fire to His Majesty's ships, dockyards, or arsenals. For these the death penalty may be imposed: for murder it *must* be imposed.

Murder is traditionally defined as *unlawfully killing a reasonable (i.e. human) creature who is in being* (completely born and alive) *under the*

* 1947—at the time of going to press suspension of capital punishment is under consideration.

King's peace, with malice aforethought either express or implied (which means now no more than knowledge of the consequences of the act at the instant of commission); *the death following within a year and a day.*

Long before the public reads of the crime the Criminal Investigation Department of the Metropolitan Police has the case in hand.

The householder was roused by the sounds of a struggle in the small hours, came downstairs and found his butler lifeless on the floor. Immediately he dialled 999.

In the Information Room at New Scotland Yard the message is passed to the officer at the microphone almost before the householder has finished speaking. The nearest wireless car has been notified, the broadcast giving first the address where the crime was committed. The first few words tell the driver where to go, even before he knows why.

But the time lag in this case has been too great for any trace of the assailant or assailants to be seen, even though the car reaches the house within three minutes of the alarm being given.

Other police cars—patrol, Q, and Flying Squad—are ordered to scour the district. The crew of one finds a car abandoned half a mile away.

Already a Chief Detective Inspector is in charge of the case. He drives round to the house with a Detective Sergeant. The Divisional Police Surgeon, and the Yard's mobile dark-room with photography experts, follow.

In fiction the Chief Inspector (or possibly some brilliant amateur) will make a series of deductions from his own unaided powers of observation and eventually bring the criminals to justice. In fact the Chief Inspector will, as soon as possible, make use of the collective resources of the Yard.

A quick examination convinces him that although murder has been committed with malice aforethought in the legal sense, there is no reason to suppose that the man or men started out with the express intention of killing the butler. Burglary is the obvious reason for the house having been entered, and this is confirmed when the householder says that several small but very valuable articles of jewellery are missing.

Already the detective has a line on which to work. He has established from the mute evidence of articles stolen and equally important, of articles untouched, that the burglars were 'specialists' and knew exactly what type of articles they could value and dispose of, for they had picked out jewellery in which the gems were of high worth when stripped from their setting, and had discarded other pieces, more specious but of far less value, with great thoroughness. He has also decided that the men were disturbed when about to leave.

Now, while his assistant and the experts are searching for fingerprints and other possible clues, he deals with his next most important line, the method of entry. This, after careful examination of the premises,

inside and out, he is able to determine. There are signs that two men climbed on to the flat roofs of a series of garages in a back street and so gained access to a first-floor window.

Now the team work of the Yard comes into play. The results of the Chief Inspector's preliminary investigations are quickly transmitted to the Criminal Record Office and a search of the files begins. Records show that there is a list of twenty *known* criminals who make a practice of selecting certain types of gem, and *if* this robbery is the work of an old hand, he will probably be one of the twenty.

The Method Index gives 147 names of *known* criminals whose method of entry is similar to that in the present case. (These figures are, of course, purely hypothetical.)

But of these 147, only seven specialize in gems of the type stolen, so that *if* an old hand is concerned, he will probably be one of those seven. (Criminals, it should be noted, are the most conservative class of the community: they cling to the same methods even after repeated convictions.)

The records of the Yard have a lot to tell about these seven—their names and addresses, appearance (with photographs), peculiarities of speech and manner, habits, haunts, and convictions. Before long members of the C.I.D. will be making enquiries as to their whereabouts on the night of the crime.

In this task they will have the valuable help of the C.I.D. men stationed in the Divisions where the men live. It is routine work to keep a check on the movements of known criminals in each locality. And not only known criminals, but the men and women who associate with them.

One of the detectives learns that his man has not been seen for several days at either the dog-track or the public-house which he usually patronizes.

In the meantime the Yard has eliminated three of the seven 'possibles' because they are at the time serving prison sentences. The remaining three have alibis which *appear* water-tight.

The finger-print experts have failed to find any prints in the house, but prints on the wheel of the stolen car are identical with those of the missing 'possible'.

There is now little doubt in the mind of the Chief Inspector in charge that he knows at least one of the criminals, especially when Records confirm that this man is in the habit of using a stolen car for a quick getaway.

But the *opinion* of even a senior officer is not evidence on which a jury will convict, and there is still much to be done, even though the man—now definitely a suspect—helps by reappearing at the dog-track and betting heavily.

The Chief Inspector decides to pay him a personal visit.

From now on the Inspector is on tricky ground with the laws of

evidence and Judges' Rules hanging over him like a sword of Damocles. He may put what questions he thinks fit to his suspect, but the suspect is not obliged to answer them. He can, of course, draw his own conclusions from silence—as may also a jury later!

The only puzzling feature of the case to the Inspector is the killing, for it is against the run of experience that an old hand should commit violence.

The two meet as acquaintances: they have had dealings together before, carried on quite amicably and with no rancour over the inevitable consequences. Indeed, on the previous occasion when the Inspector questioned the suspect, he put up an alibi so impudently false that it was blown up without further enquiries—as the suspect cheerfully acknowledged.

This time he is ill-at-ease, inclined to be surly. Again he has an alibi, but one that will require careful checking.

"Where were you on the night of the eleventh?"

"Met a friend. Went for a drink at the *Green Man* with him. Went home to bed and didn't stir."

"Got that pretty pat, haven't you?"

"Look here, mister, I knew you'd be round to see me, so I worked out what I was doing. I'm not a killer—you know that."

"So you had a drink, with a friend? We can soon check that, can't we? What's his name?"

"I'm not saying. He ain't in the clear just now. He wasn't anything to do with this."

The Inspector is more convinced than ever, but he still lacks evidence. But he has a big handle in this case, and he is going to use it.

"A car was stolen from — Street that night. Know anything about it?"

"Not a thing, mister."

"Care to explain how your finger-prints got on the wheel?"

Blank surprise, unconvincing to the detective. An invitation to the Yard to discuss the matter further. Finally, charge of driving away a motor-car without the consent of the owner.

"Do you wish to say anything in answer to the charge?" enquires the detective. "You are not obliged to say anything unless you wish to do so, but whatever you say will be taken down in writing and may be given in evidence." (*Not*, please, "May be used in evidence against you".)

The prisoner, now in custody, shakes his head. He spends the night at Brixton Prison.

In the morning the prisoner appears before a Stipendiary Magistrate at one of London's Police¹ courts. He is still charged only with driving away a motor-car, but after formal evidence of arrest has been given

¹ Now, properly, 'Magistrates' Courts'.

the Police apply for a remand in custody, stating that more serious charges may be preferred.

The prisoner applies for bail, which the Police oppose very strongly.

Within a few minutes he has been remanded for a week in custody, and granted a certificate for legal aid by the Magistrate on the ground that he has no means. He spends the week at Brixton as a remand prisoner, where he enjoys the privileges of those who are as yet unconvicted. He may see his solicitor, and he certainly will see the Detective Inspector in charge of the case.

The Inspector, now quite certain of his man, calls on all the resources of the Yard to produce evidence that will convince the Magistrate that the case ought to go for trial.

The stolen car is examined minutely by experts from the Police Laboratories. The vacuum cleaner is run over mats and seats, and the dust collected on the filter-paper (*see* Chapter VI) is examined under the microscope. The man's clothes receive the same treatment. There is just one clue.

At the burgled premises was found the broken-off top of a screw-driver which had been used to force the small lock of a jewel-case. The screw-driver itself is found in the back of the car and the piece fits beyond all doubt.

On the handle of the screw-driver is a finger-print corresponding to the recorded prints of the prisoner.

The Inspector goes back to Brixton and confronts the prisoner with this new evidence.

"I'll tell you . . ." he says. This is a case founded on real life and not fiction.

The prisoner dictates a statement and the Inspector, mindful of Judges' Rules, listens without comment. When he has finished, it is read back to him and he signs it.

Judges' Rules¹ lay down the following points as a guide to procedure and as a protection for an accused person. They are:

1. When a Police Officer is endeavouring to discover the author of a crime, there is no objection to his putting questions in respect thereof to any person or persons, whether suspected or not, from whom he thinks that useful information can be obtained.

2. Whenever a Police Officer has made up his mind to charge a person with a crime, he should first caution such person before asking any questions or further questions, as the case may be.

3. Persons in custody should not be questioned without the usual caution being first administered.

4. If the prisoner wishes to volunteer a statement, the usual caution should be administered. It is advisable that the last two

¹ By permission of the Home Office and the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office, upon payment of a royalty to the latter.

words (i.e. 'against you') of the usual caution should be omitted and that the caution should end with the words 'be given in evidence'.

5. The caution to be administered to a prisoner, when he is formally charged, should therefore be in the following words: "Do you wish to say anything in answer to the charge? You are not obliged to say anything unless you wish to do so, but whatever you say will be taken down in writing and may be given in evidence."

Care should be taken to avoid any suggestion that his answer can only be used in evidence against him, as this may prevent an innocent person making a statement which might assist to clear him of the charge.

6. A statement made by a prisoner before there is time to caution him is not rendered inadmissible in evidence merely by reason of no caution having been given, but in such a case he should be cautioned as soon as possible.

7. A prisoner making a voluntary statement must not be cross-examined, and no questions should be put to him about it except for the purpose of removing ambiguity in what he has actually said. For instance, if he has mentioned an hour without saying whether it was morning or evening, or has given a day of the week and day of the month which do not agree, or has not made it clear to what individual or what place he intended to refer in some part of his statement, he may be questioned sufficiently to clear up the point.

8. When two or more persons are charged with the same offence and statements are taken separately from the persons charged, the Police should not read these statements to the other persons charged but each of such persons should be furnished by the Police with a copy of such statements, and nothing should be done by the Police to invite a reply. If the person charged desires to make a statement in reply, the usual caution should be administered.

9. Any statement made in accordance with the above rules should whenever possible, be taken down in writing and signed by the person making it after it has been read to him and he has been invited to make any corrections he may wish.

At the end the Inspector looks very thoughtful. The statement has incriminated another person not in custody. The man has yet to be arrested, and every word of the statement has to be checked. Although it amounts to a confession of burglary, a full case has to be prepared. There is now a murder charge pending.

The arrest of the second man is a matter of time rather than skill. A full description of him has been circulated to all police forces, watch is kept at sea and air ports. The public is invited, through the daily press, to give information about the whereabouts of a man 'whom, the Police believe, may be able to give them some assistance'.

When that has been done, the C.I.D. does not rest content, but pushes forward its enquiries with all available officers.

In one murder case detectives actually called at every house in a London postal district as a matter of routine.

This second man is an amateur in crime. He is unacquainted with the hide-outs of regular criminals and foolishly he flees to the country. He does not realize that a small village is the worst possible place for concealment, for the presence of every stranger is noted by the residents and by the village constable. Before long he is arrested and detained to await the arrival of officers from Scotland Yard who will take him to London where he will be formally charged.

At the next hearing before the Magistrate two men appear in the dock, charged with murder and burglary. They are remanded for a week in custody, since the police case (or case for the Crown) is not yet ready.

The prosecution is now in the hands of the Director of Public Prosecutions but the work of the police is by no means finished, for a full case—with evidence and witnesses—must be presented at the next hearing before the magistrate.

In the meantime the inquest on the victim has been opened by the Coroner (England's oldest law officer who holds an enquiry into every death in which the circumstances are not obvious or satisfactory—usually he is both a barrister and a doctor) and adjourned *sine die*, since court proceedings are pending.

The lawyers for the Crown (in all cases of murder and most cases of felony in England, the King is nominally the prosecutor) have several points to consider. Each of the accused men has made a statement admitting his presence in the house at the time of the murder, and each seeks to throw the blame on the other.

Shall the men be tried together as joint authors of the crime, or shall each stand his trial separately? The Judge will make a final decision on the point, but not before he has heard legal arguments on each side. It must be remembered that each statement is evidence only against (or for) the man who made it and cannot be used as evidence against another party. When they stand trial, however, the evidence of one man against another, given in the presence of the second man, is valid.

There are two points of law to be considered in connection with this case: First, the law regarding the charge of murder. It will be no defence to the accused persons to plead that they were acting in self-defence when at the time they were engaged on a felony. Second, the law in regard to individual guilt where two or more persons are concerned in a murder. It is held that *if several persons act together in pursuit of a common (felonious) intent, every act in furtherance of it by any one of them is, in law, done by all*. But the law is not inflexible on this point, and rules that the act done must relate to the common design and not totally or substantially vary from it.

In the case of Brown and Kennedy who were tried together for the murder of P.C. Gutteridge, Mr. Frank Powell who defended Kennedy argued that his client had no case to answer since he neither fired the fatal shots nor anticipated that his companion would commit murder. He cited in support an old case in which two men had set out to rob an orchard. One man stood on guard with a sword at the gate while the other actually stole the fruit. The man on guard, confronted by the owner, killed him. Both men were charged with murder, but the second man was acquitted.

Kennedy was, in fact, found equally guilty, and another case in which two people have been found guilty of murder in parallel circumstances is that of Hulton and Jones, mentioned in Chapter X.

Had it been clearly established in the hypothetical case under review that the fatal blow was struck by the second man, he alone might have been indicted for murder, since his companion was unarmed and had never been known to use violence. As it is, each man has made a statement accusing the other.

The weapon, which has been found on some waste ground, bears the finger-prints of both men.

The statement of the 'old lag' says:

"—— was holding my jemmy: I saw him strike the butler a blow on the head."

The second man's statement says:

"There was a struggle; —— pushed the butler and he fell, striking his head against the corner of the fender."

No traces of such a fall were found on the fender, but the investigating officers consider that both men may have been struggling with the victim, in which case both are equally guilty.

The day arrives for the next hearing before the magistrate, and now the Crown case is complete. All witnesses and exhibits for the prosecution are at court. Counsel appointed by the Public Prosecutor gives a brief explanation of the case, his witnesses give their evidence, are cross-examined by counsel for the accused, re-examined by counsel for the prosecution. Every word is taken down in longhand by the Clerk of the Court and the record will be available to the accused and their legal advisers.

When the Crown case has been presented in full, the magistrate turns to the two men and asks them if they have anything to say. They need not say anything unless they like, he tells them, and they have nothing to hope from any promise nor to fear from any threat. He also invites them to call evidence if they so desire.

Their counsel answer for them. They plead not guilty and reserve their defence.

The usual form of oath in an English Court of Law is taken with a New Testament held in the right hand.

"I swear by Almighty God that the evidence I shall give to the Court shall be the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

The witness is not required to kiss the Book, but may do.

Variation of the procedure is allowed to suit the religious conviction of the witness. If a witness objects to the oath on religious grounds or claims that he has no religion, his Solemn Affirmation to speak the truth will be accepted. A Jew is sworn on the Old Testament with his hat on, a Mahommedan on the Koran, some Eastern religions require that the flame of a candle be blown out, others that a plate be broken. The line is drawn at slaughtering a white cock!

The magistrate, satisfied that a good case has been made out, commits the accused for trial. They will be remanded at Brixton until their case is called at the Central Criminal Court (the Old Bailey).

Each witness is required to sign the record of his evidence, and is bound over to appear at the trial.

In the intervening time the accused will have opportunity to consult with their legal advisers and to study the case against them. The prosecution, on the other hand, may have no clue whatever until the trial has opened of what line the defence will take.

It is a popular saying in England that no man may be tried twice for the same offence.

Up to a point this is perfectly true, and Montague Williams, Q.C., recorded the case of a tramp who had murdered his benefactress. The man was acquitted, celebrated his release with much liquor, and went down the road shouting: "My counsel got me off, but this is the hand that did the deed."

He remained a free man, for at his trial *he stood in danger of conviction*. Had he been charged with the commission of a murder on a date when in fact no murder took place, for example, he would be acquitted (for since no murder took place on that date, he was never in danger), but could be re-arrested and charged with murder on the correct date.

CHAPTER XVIII

TRIAL BY JURY

Author's Note.—This case has been selected to illustrate Court procedure and to give cameos of a murder trial as examples of examination-in-chief and cross-examination. It neither claims to be an adequate report of the trial of Harry Dobkin as such, nor even to strike a balance between prosecution and defence. Many people are ignorant of what goes on in Court during a trial for murder, and for them this chapter has been added.

THE Clerk of the Court asks:

“Harry Dobkin, you are charged with the murder of Rach Dobkin on the eleventh day of April, One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty One. Are you guilty or not guilty?”

“Not guilty, my lord.”

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The preliminaries are ended, and on this 17th day of November 1942, Harry Dobkin stands in the dock of the Old Bailey on trial for his life.

On the Bench the Judge, the sombre sable of his robes slashed with scarlet. Beside him his Chaplain, his clerk, and Aldermen of the City.

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There is no event in the world so full of stately dignity and sombre pageant as a trial for murder in an English court.

The whole atmosphere is one of impressive power, backed by centuries of tradition. It is a strange atmosphere which weighs on the present till emotions are compressed and struggle for outlet. The rare laughter in court is an expression of sudden relief rather than spontaneous appreciation of humour.

Facing the Judge, in the dock, stands the prisoner. There are two ways out of the dock: one leads to the well of the court and, perhaps, freedom; the other to the cells below and, perhaps, to the scaffold.

Beside the prisoner stand officers of the Prison Service. He has been delivered into their custody and they have produced the body as required.

At one side of the court is the jury-box where a mixed jury of twelve sit to hear the evidence. They are twelve ordinary citizens, for a man must be tried by his peers (equals).

Facing the Judge in the well of the court sit counsel, black-robed and grey-wigged, near them the instructing solicitors and their clerks.

In England a barrister alone has the right to plead in the higher courts, and he takes his instructions from a solicitor. In criminal cases the barrister has direct access to his client and may even accept a 'dock brief' from a prisoner who has up till this been without legal representation. More usually the accused person has previously been in consultation with a solicitor who has prepared a brief and delivered it to the barrister of his choice. When the leading counsel (a barrister) in a case is a K.C. or 'silk', he must have a junior.

Such counsel as 'takes silk' is usually a barrister of ten years' standing at least. He is then 'one of His Majesty's Counsel, learned in the law'.

The barrister who has not assumed the silken gown of a K.C. is a junior, a term misleading to the layman, for it refers neither to his age nor to his experience. Many of the ablest counsel now practising have no wish to 'take silk'.

To one side of the court is the witness-box, from which the prisoner himself may give evidence if he so desires.

Dress of both Judge and counsel is a survival from the ordinary clerical dress of the early fourteenth century. The essential features that have been retained are the gown, the coif, and the ruff. The coif, originally, was a close-fitting linen cap tied under the chin. With the introduction of the wig in the seventeenth century the coif was rendered superfluous and it is now symbolized by the round depression in the top of the Judge's wig. The ruff, or elaborate collar, became in Stuart times the rabato, in Georgian days the cravat, and now the collar and bands. In the Middle Ages the Judge wore, when not on the Bench, a square black cap of velvet or cloth. When on the Bench this was tucked in the girdle. It survives as the 'black cap', now a square of black silk.

Only on special occasions is the Judge robed in scarlet and full-bottomed wig, and on those occasions he carries the black cap. It is worn when passing sentence of death and when the Lord Mayor of London is received, after his election, at the Royal Courts of Justice.

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"Not guilty, my Lord."

The members of the jury are sworn that "they will well and truly try and a true deliverance make between our Sovereign Lord, the King, and the prisoner at the bar according to the evidence".

The Clerk of the Court turns towards the jury-box.

"Members of the jury. The prisoner at the bar, Harry Dobkin, is charged with the murder of Rachel Dobkin on the eleventh of April, 1941. To this indictment he has pleaded Not Guilty, and it is your charge to say, having heard the evidence, whether he be guilty or not."

Mr. L. A. Byrne, who leads for the Crown, is on his feet.

"May it please your Lordship, members of the jury: I appear for the

Prosecution with my learned friend, Mr. (Gerald) Howard, and the prisoner is defended by my learned friend, Mr. (F. H.) Lawton."

Mr. Byrne proceeds then to open his case. He outlines the story that will be confirmed by witnesses whom he will shortly call.

This is the story that he tells.

The Dobkins were married in September of 1920, and the marriage never proved satisfactory. In three months they had parted, and Mrs. Dobkin obtained a maintenance order of £1 a week. This was varied from time to time, and in 1941 it stood at 10s. a week. Twice, later, they tried to live together, but each time the experiment ended in failure. There was one child, a son.

From 3rd April, 1941, to 20th May, 1943, Dobkin was employed as a fire-watcher at some premises in 302 Kennington Lane.

On 11th April, 1941, Mrs. Dobkin had lunch with her sister, Miss Dubinski, who went out to her work between 1.30 and 2 p.m.

Miss Dubinski never saw her sister again. The next morning she went to Mrs. Dobkin's flat, but found it empty. The bed had not been slept in. At three o'clock Miss Dubinski reported her sister's disappearance to the police. On the same day Mrs. Dobkin's handbag was found on the floor of the post office at Guildford.

At half-past three on the morning of 14th April fire broke out in a bomb-damaged chapel adjoining the premises where Dobkin did his fire-watching. A constable saw the blaze and summoned the fire brigade who found the crypt alight. There had been no air raid that night.

"Evidence will make it quite plain that in fact the fire had been deliberately started by someone, and the prosecution are going to ask you, when you have heard the whole of the evidence in this case, to say that the fire must have been started by the prisoner, for nobody else had a motive for starting it," declared Mr. Byrne. "It was started by him, no doubt, with the intention of burning the remains of his wife which he already knew to be in that cellar."

On 17th July, 1942 (fifteen months after the disappearance of Mrs. Dobkin), a demolition worker was clearing the debris of the chapel. He moved a slab of paving-stone and saw human remains underneath. The remains were removed to Southwark mortuary and examined by Dr. Keith Simpson. From what he found, the doctor came to the conclusion that the body was that of a woman, and that the cause of death was manual strangulation.

Mr. Byrne concludes his opening, and the witnesses for the prosecution are called, examined, cross-examined by Mr. Lawton for the defence, re-examined. Brick by brick the plan, as one might call it, given by Mr. Byrne, becomes a solid edifice at the hands of the Crown witnesses

Mrs. Dobkin disappeared on 11th April, 1941: the body was not discovered until 17th July of the following year. And part of the case for the Crown was that the woman had died from manual strangulation. It can well be imagined that the medical evidence was closely followed and hotly contested by the defence. Here is a portion of what transpired in court.

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Dr. Cedric Keith Simpson (on oath): "I formed the view that death had taken place some twelve to eighteen months prior to that date (18th July, 1942). . . . The head was severed from the trunk, but they were complementary; that is to say they fitted each other. . . . I estimated the height to be about five feet and a quarter inch to five feet and three-quarter inch. . . . I estimated the age to be somewhere between forty and fifty. I found . . . two injuries inflicted before death . . . first, an injury to the voice-box; the upper horn of the right wing of the voice-box was fractured, this part of the bone being thrust in towards the wind-pipe. . . . I found evidence to prove that this occurred in life. . . . I formed the opinion that this was the result of strangulation by the hand, as this type of fracture, existing alone, occurs only under those circumstances, in my experience."

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Mr. Lawton rose to cross-examine and his questions showed a remarkable depth of medical knowledge. He attacked the witness's estimate of age and height.

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Mr. Lawton: "So if Mrs. Dobkin in life was five feet three inches, then this body cannot be that of Mrs. Dobkin?"

Dr. Keith Simpson agreed.

Mr. Justice Wrottesley: "That is true of every one of those elements. If any one element of the body can be demonstrated not to correspond, the jury will have to be told, of course, that the case is finished."

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Still more hotly did Mr. Lawton contest the opinion that death must have occurred from manual strangulation.

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Mr. Lawton: "So what it comes to is this, is it? That by looking at a piece of bone, the right wing which is about a quarter-inch too long,

and the bruising of the tissues near by, you say that on that alone you can say what the cause of death was?"

Dr. Keith Simpson: "Yes, I think that is one of the most highly significant injuries that ever occur."

"I do not disagree with you that the horn of the thyroid *may* be broken during the course of manual strangulation, but I want you to go through one or two other matters and see whether it may be broken in any other way. . . . I want you to assume that this situation arises: somebody . . . being thrown violently forward by blast from a high-explosive bomb . . . catching the voice-box on a kerb or a piece of brick. . . . Is it not possible—I do not put it any higher than that—that a fall under these circumstances might break the cornu (horn) of the right thyroid?"

Dr. Keith Simpson: ". . . I say that in fifteen years I have personally examined over eleven thousand cases, and I have never seen this injury except in manual strangulation."

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Mr. Lawton was not yet satisfied. The death of Mrs. Dobkin had occurred at a time when London was being subjected to the almost nightly attentions of the *Luftwaffe*. Among the hundreds of casualties there had been many strange injuries.

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Mr. Lawton: "Let us take just another possibility as to how this injury may have occurred. Let us assume conditions of air raids, and a tiny bomb splinter passing into the neck. . . . Is it not just possible, as a matter of anatomy, for a bomb splinter to pass through the thyroid and catch that one horn and no more?"

Dr. Keith Simpson: "I think you are drawing a very remote possibility. *It certainly exists.*"

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Thus Mr. Lawton had, with considerable skill and patience, drawn from the Crown's most vital witness the one admission that could help his client. "*It certainly exists.*" (The italics are the author's.)

Before the prosecution could establish its case, it was necessary to prove beyond all reasonable doubt that the remains, partly burnt and mostly decomposed, were those of Mrs. Dobkin. Failing that, there was nothing to connect the crime with the accused. But the prosecution had a witness belonging to a profession that has often given irrefutable proof of identity when all other means have failed.

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Mr. Gerald Howard (examining for the prosecution): "Are you a dental surgeon?"

Mr. B. A. Kopkin: "Yes." . . .

Mr. Justice Wrottesley: "Because of the upper jaw you recognized the skull as that of a patient you had once attended, because it corresponded in so many details. Is that what you say?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"When you say 'a patient I once attended', which patient do you mean?"

"Mrs. Dobkin—Rachel Dobkin."

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In England an accused person is entitled, if he wishes, to give evidence on his own behalf. Usually he accepts the advice of his solicitor and counsel on this point. If he goes into the witness-box and takes the oath, he may, of course, be cross-examined.

Harry Dobkin on the third day of the trial entered the box. In his evidence he denied knowledge of the existence of the cellar or crypt where the body was found.

When it came to the turn of Mr. Byrne to cross-examine, his questions were quiet, pointed, none the less dramatic because they lacked sensationalism. The sensationalism was supplied by Dobkin himself.

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Mr. Byrne: "Let me understand what you are saying. Are you saying that in fact you were left alone by the police officer in order that you should make a confession of having murdered your wife?"

"Yes."

"You really seriously say that, do you?"

"Seriously say that."

"And that accounts for your saying in that statement that you think you are being accused of holding something back. That is what you say about it, is it?"

"Yes."

Mr. Byrne: "What made you think you were being left alone in order to write a confession?"

"Mr. Hatton (Divisional Detective Inspector Hatton) left me with a fourth man alone in his office at the Borough Police Station for over an hour."

"Well?"

"That one man who I recognize in this court at the present time, and it was one hour of silence, and when Mr. Hatton returned, and the fourth man who I recognize at this court, I handed that note in writing to state that my statement to Mr. Hatton at Commercial Street Police

Station and my statements at City Road Police Station are the very same as my statements to Mr. Hatton and company."

Mr. Byrne: "Believe me, I do not want to interrupt you, but this is a serious enough matter. Will you try to remember the questions and then try to answer them? You see, the question I asked you had got nothing to do with the answer you gave. I said: Did the police lead you to think that they wanted you to write a confession?"

Dobkin: "They asked me under threats that if I do not admit that I killed my wife, or that I had taken my wife, or what I have done they will hang me, and at that time one of Mr. Hatton's assistants recited a poem called *The Wheels of Justice*, and I commended him that he would be a better hangman than being a poet. And that is the man over there."

"I want to understand what you say. You say they threatened you? The threat was that if you did not confess they would hang you?"

"Yes."

"And you ask the jury to believe that, do you?"

"I certainly do."

Mr. Justice Wrottesley: "Were you born in this country?"

"I came from Russia when I was two months old."

"Then you were not born in this country but you were brought up here?"

"I was brought up here."

"Ever since you could speak you have been in England?"

"Yes."

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The reasons that prompted the Judge's questions would seem obvious. Whether Dobkin wished to confuse the issue by an assumption of illiteracy is not clear. The fact remains that under cross-examination he definitely committed himself to an allegation of threats made by responsible police officers.

In the matter of statements, the Law preserves the rights of accused persons with meticulous care. Earlier in the trial the jury were excluded from court while counsel argued on the admissibility of remarks alleged to have been made by Dobkin in answer to questions put to him by Divisional Inspector Hatton.

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After Dobkin had left the box and returned to the dock, Mr. Lawton called other witnesses for the defence. At the conclusion of this evidence he addressed the jury—his final words on behalf of the accused man.

Mr. Byrne then addressed the jury on behalf of the prosecution.

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There now remains one more act before the case passes into the hands of the jury to determine the issue and 'a true deliverance' on the question of *facts* as revealed in evidence. The Judge must sum up. It is his duty to state quite clearly those facts on which a decision may be reached, giving each its due weight. Here are his final words.

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"Members of the jury, I have taken you through all the evidence. I have indicated to you as best I could the matters to which you should apply your minds. For the last time let me remind you of this: if you believe his story, you will of course acquit him. He has sworn that he knows nothing about it; that is as clear as the day.

"Members of the jury, if anything that has been said, or if anything that has happened in this case brings you finally to this conclusion—that you have a real doubt that he committed the murder—of course you will say Not Guilty. Persons are not convicted of any crime in this country on suspicion, however high.

"But, members of the jury, if you are satisfied that that was the dead body of Rachel Dobkin that was found down in that cellar, and was in that fire—if you are satisfied as to that and are satisfied that she was killed, and that that man killed her, then, of course, you know your duty, and you will say that he is Guilty.

"Will you now consider your verdict. I think you have all the material you want. If there is anything else you want, just ask for it."

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The jury files out to be locked in a special room where they will arrive at their verdict. The Judge rises, exchanges bows with counsel, and retires. The prisoner, between his two prison officers, disappears below to the cells. There is an outbreak of quick, excited conversation among the members of the public.

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Twenty minutes pass. There is a stir at the side of the court. The jury file back and take their seats. A short, tense pause until the Judge has been summoned and has taken his seat on the bench. Dobkin reappears in the dock. He stands stiffly between his guards.

From the Clerk of the Court: "Members of the jury, are you agreed upon your verdict?"

At a sign from the usher the foreman rises to his feet.

"We are," he answers for them all.

"Do you find the prisoner, Harry Dobkin, guilty or not guilty of murder?"

"Guilty, my Lord."

The Clerk of the Court turns to Dobkin.

"Prisoner at the bar, you stand convicted of murder. Have you anything to say why the Court should not give you judgment of death according to law?"

"Yes sir," says Dobkin, "I have something to say."

From the Judge: "Say on."

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There is no case on record in modern times in which this final plea from a man condemned by his peers has altered his fate. His right to raise a despairing voice is now no more than a hollow privilege, for every point that can be raised in his favour has already been put forward.

Many say nothing. Many more make as their last public utterance: "Only that I am innocent." Others take the opportunity to review the evidence or to condemn those who have condemned them.

Dobkin choses to speak. He repeats his allegations against the police and adds a further charge of violence.

Allowing for the imperfection of his English, allowing for the stories he may well have heard of the methods of the Russian Police in Tsarist days, his plea is pitifully naïve.

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"I have something to say that this charge against me is very poorly invented, and that is why I do not like to give evidence against the police, but I claim that this charge of murder, as I mentioned, is simply invented by showing photographs. Oswald's Place chapel was not shown by the photographers of the prosecution, also a broken entrance and other entrances according to photographs given by the prosecution, also a quantity of debris that was not mentioned by the prosecution that was cleared away at St. Oswald's Place about the time of the fire, which could be proved by the Borough Council and the chaps of a Catholic Church which is right opposite Oswald's Place bombed chapel where I have marked with a cross in the witness-box. I might have mentioned, but I felt greatly embarrassed in the witness-box, and I also wish to state, that during the twelve hours of questioning by Mr. Hatton at the Borough Police Station I was subject not only to questions but to violence used against me, which I did not like to give evidence against the police. Violence was used against me in Mr. Hatton's office, also in the cell at the Borough Police Station, including 302 Kennington Lane. I hope I have not said too much."

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A brief silence, then, from the usher: "Oyez, oyez, oyez. My Lords the King's Justices do strictly charge and command all persons to keep silence while sentence of death is passed on the prisoner at the bar upon pain of imprisonment. God save the King."

The Judge's clerk places the black square on his master's head.

From the Judge: "Harry Dobkin, after a patient hearing the jury have come to what I think is the right conclusion in this matter. The sentence is the sentence laid down by law for the offence you have committed, and it is that you be taken from this place to a lawful prison and thence to a place of execution, and that you be there hanged by the neck until you be dead; and that your body be afterwards buried within the precincts of the prison in which you shall have been confined before your execution.

"And may the Lord have mercy on your soul."

From the Chaplain in fitting finality: "Amen."

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Dobkin's appeal failed and he was duly hanged according to law.

HIS MAJESTY'S GUESTS

A MISTAKEN idea persists among many people that the police have the power to send people to prison, or that they are the custodians of those who have been sent there.

Not, perhaps, an unnatural mistake, since a prison sentence usually follows the arrest of a wrongdoer by the police. A mistake, moreover, that is all too often inculcated in childhood and persists throughout life. Who has not heard some harassed mother exclaim: "If you don't behave, Johnny, I shall ask the policeman to take you to prison!"

In England the police neither control nor administer the prisons, nor have they any jurisdiction over those who dwell within prison walls.

English prisons are administered under the Home Office by H.M. Prison Commissioners, and staffed by the Prison Officers' Service. The police officer who wishes to interview a prisoner, whether a convicted person or one awaiting trial, must seek permission from the Governor of the prison concerned, and the interview will be held under the supervision of a member of the prison staff. This is a just provision and protects police and prisoners alike from any suggestion of 'third degree'. If two Police Officers are present, the interview may be conducted within sight but out of hearing of a Prison Officer.

Men and women awaiting trial who cannot, for various reasons, be admitted to bail are the only inmates of prisons who have not been sent there after sentence at a Court of Justice, and the English courts of Petty Session, Quarter Session, and Assize are themselves independent of the police. The term, 'Police Court' is itself a gross misnomer and arises from the time when the magistrate was a police officer.

When a man or woman is sent to prison, whether on remand or after sentence, the 'body' is delivered by the police to the Governor of the prison and a receipt is given acquitting them of further responsibility for custody. The cells at police-stations are no more than very temporary means of ensuring that the accused person shall appear for trial, and sentences are, with one exception, never served there. The exception arises when a magistrate sentences a convicted person to one day's imprisonment, which means release at the end of the day, for the time already spent in custody is reckoned as the sentence.

It is no part of the purpose of this book to discuss the merits and disadvantages of the English prison system. At the same time it would not be complete were it not to show what happens to those who are convicted on criminal charges in the Courts.

The short-term man will serve his sentence at his local prison, but even though his sentence is no more than a matter of weeks, he is not just 'dumped' until the time for his release comes. In less enlightened days prison served merely as a place wherein a man was deprived of liberty and comfort: to-day, while he is certainly deprived of his liberty and is certainly not regaled with luxuries, he is treated as an individual, and the guiding principle of English justice is extended—he is regarded as being capable of reform unless and until he himself proves the contrary. He will be given the opportunity to adjust his social outlook, and in some suitable cases will be encouraged to learn a trade, if he wishes, so that he can earn a living on his release. The efforts on his behalf do not end with his sentence and he is helped to find employment where he may be protected not only from the spiteful who know of his past but from himself.

No prison system can or ever will be able to claim complete success in reforming its inmates: there will always be a proportion of recidivists who are amenable neither to kindness nor to strict discipline, but the percentage of success is as high as can be expected. The author was recently informed by an old 'lag' who had finally gone straight after many convictions that he owed all his education, from reading and writing to mastery of a trade, to what he had been taught in prison.

Formerly the chief qualification for the position of Prison Governor was the ability to maintain discipline at all costs and in all circumstances: now profound knowledge of psychology and a sense of humanity are at least equally important. These characteristics prevail as a general rule throughout the prison staffs, and the visitor is struck by the relations that exist between prisoners and officers, more reminiscent of recruit and non-commissioned officer than of the traditional idea of captive and gaoler. Many officers show obvious pride in prisoners who give promise of becoming useful citizens.

But prison is prison, as the prisoner must realize from the moment when the massive outer gates are unlocked to receive him. He has incurred the displeasure of the Law and he must work out his salvation the hard way.

Immediately he is received the document authorizing detention is checked, and all his personal belongings which he has with him are entered in the property book. A description of every item is listed in full and he puts his signature to the list. All valuables are taken for safe custody to the Steward's office, while small chattels are locked in a cupboard by the Reception Officer.

When the personal belongings have been checked, the man strips, bathes, and dresses in prison uniform according to his class—grey for ordinary prisoners, brown for debtors and remand prisoners (who are not compelled either to bathe or to wear prison dress), blue for boys. Within a few hours the newly-received prisoner will be examined

by the Medical Officer who will decide his category so that the Governor or his deputy may allocate him to suitable work. His own clothes are stored in a private kit room after all underclothing has been laundered. Before he leaves his suit will be pressed and his shoes mended, if necessary. There are three medical grades: No. 1, which is fit for every type of job; No. 2, which has only light duties; and No. 3, which is untasked. This last grade includes those who are over sixty and those who are disabled.

Very soon after his admission the man will appear before a reception board consisting of the Governor or Deputy Governor, the Chaplain and the representative of the Prisoner's Aid Society. This interview is all-important: not only will the members of the Board decide what type of man they have to deal with and how he can best be helped, but they will relieve him of much mental torment by questioning him about his home and family, and making it clear to him that his dependents will not be allowed to starve. It is not, perhaps, generally known that the dependants of a man serving a prison sentence are legally entitled to public assistance.

During his stay in prison the man will have access on application to the Governor, the Medical Officer, and the Chaplain, and while frivolous pretexts for interview are not encouraged, all reasonable requests and complaints are given careful consideration.

Men who have never before served a term of imprisonment are in the 'star' class unless they forfeit the privilege by misconduct. Some are employed on such work as farming all day with one officer in charge of ten or fifteen. Other adult prisoners are employed at sewing mail bags, a necessary but monotonous task and one not suitable for long term prisoners. The men sit on benches under the supervision of a prison officer like children at school. Conversation is discouraged at work except for essential purposes, but is allowed at exercise and on other occasions when prisoners associate.

Young offenders work in the shoe-repair and leather shops and other industries under the direction of qualified instructors. In addition to repairs, prison footwear is manufactured, and belts and leather equipment for the Post Office and other Government Departments are made at Bedford. Some men work in the laundry and kitchen.

Men serving sentences of over nine months are encouraged to learn a trade, and those suitable are drafted to Maidstone Prison, where technical classes are held in a variety of subjects.

The prison libraries not only provide a wide range of fiction, but have shelves of technical books, and there is a Central Technical Library at Wakefield from which special books may be obtained on a request signed by a Prison Governor. Books can be changed two or three times a week, and in most prisons the men are allowed to select their own. A 'star' prisoner acts as librarian under the supervision of a prison officer.

After one month the 'star' prisoner is allowed to participate in an earning scheme which entitles him to a few coppers each week to be spent on tobacco. Smoking in the cells at the end of the day is the one luxury permitted to well-behaved men. All men are allowed to read in their cells in the evening.

Food is measured for each individual and compares not unfavourably in these days of strict rationing with what may be obtained by the harassed housewife outside—with the additional advantage that there is no queueing to obtain necessities. It is, in fact, based on the ordinary civilian ration plus what can be obtained on points. The allowance of bread, baked in the prison in many cases, is 15 oz. a day, and the men have their individual sugar ration to use with their evening cocoa or morning porridge. The author found samples of the food, taken at random from stock, to be appetizing as well as satisfying. In some prisons refrigeration plants are installed.

Religious services are held twice on Sundays and once at mid-week. The official attitude towards these has changed in recent years and the prisoner no longer feels that they are 'part of his sentence'. Concerts are held once a month and the Salvation Army provides frequent cinema shows. Prison visitors keep the men informed of what is happening in the outside world—an important piece of rehabilitation treatment which enables them to return to liberty with a knowledge of current affairs from geo-politics to sport. The visitors and prison officials also conduct handicraft classes for boys and special classes for illiterates.

The usual lay-out for the living quarters of a prison (built, as many were, a hundred years ago) is in the form of a huge cross or star, glass roofed, with cells and administrative offices on the ground floor and two or more galleries of cells above radiating from the centre. The galleries are reached by spiral stairs of open iron-work, and steel netting is stretched beneath each gallery. Long hours of solitude without the feeling of privacy (for every cell can be surveyed by the passing prison officer) is no light part of the punishment of prison.

The prison day begins as a rule at 6.30, when the prisoner washes and cleans his cell. Officers bring round the breakfast, and cells are locked while the staff have their own meal. At eight o'clock there is half an hour's exercise in the grounds, after which the men go to their respective duties in laundry, kitchen, and workshops. At midday the men file past the kitchens where they collect their dinner in double containers for consumption in the cells. The cells are locked for an hour and a half, followed by another half-hour's exercise and the afternoon's work. Supper is eaten in the cells, which are again locked at 5.30.

The remaining hours of the twenty-four are not always spent in solitude, for the prisoner may receive a call from the Chaplain or a prison visitor; he may attend an educational or handicraft class or a concert.

In any case he will be required to perform a certain amount of work and will be allowed to read books from the library—fiction, vocational or educational.

It is now recognized that nothing is more degrading and less calculated to readjust a prisoner's social outlook than senseless, non-productive labour. The dreadful days of the treadmill are over, and some of the products of the prison workshops reach a very high standard. Brushes made at Wandsworth for all classes of cleaning work in Government Departments are (at the time of writing at least) far superior to any the housewife can buy, while cabinet work in the carpenter's shop at the same prison reaches an astonishing standard of excellence considering the poor quality of the materials now available.

Visitors are allowed every four weeks to Star prisoners, every eight weeks to the Ordinary class during the First Stage, thereafter every four weeks. Normally the prisoner sees his visitor in a cubicle with thick glass between. Several layers of steel mesh at the sides allow the free passage of sound but of nothing else. On special occasions, such as legal visits or urgent domestic affairs, the prisoner may see his visitor in the Visiting Room where the two are separated only by a long table. A prison officer is always present, though if two police officers visit, the prison officer stands outside the glass-panelled door. His presence protects the prisoner from any attempt at third degree (and his interrogator from any allegation of it!).

The most powerful incentive to good conduct is remission of sentence, now a third for all classes of prisoners, though in the case of convicts this remission is not absolute but is a release on conditional licence. Remission is, in fact, the normal procedure, and the Governor has power to order forfeiture of not more than fourteen days. Serious breaches of discipline are passed to the Visiting Committee, whose power in this respect is limited only by the length of the full sentence.

Other punishments are restricted diet and various degrees of solitary confinement. Violent prisoners may be placed in special cells where they can harm neither themselves nor property, but mechanical restraint may not be used either for punishment or for safe custody.

The prisons for men in the London Area are Brixton, where all unconvicted adults are lodged as well as adult 'stars' serving three months or under, also aliens and detainees; Wormwood Scrubbs, which is for adult 'stars' serving over three months, unconvicted youths, Borstal lads temporarily transferred for misconduct, and surgical and psychological cases; Wandsworth, for convicted adults of the Ordinary class (recidivists); Pentonville, which is at present an overflow.

Women prisoners are lodged at Holloway, colloquially, 'The Castle' and while basically the same rules apply for women as for men, the sex of the prisoners and the fact that all classes are sent here give the prison its own particular problems.

Structurally, Holloway differs little from any other prison except that perhaps its outlines are less austere and its flower-beds more profuse, but there is also a different atmosphere hard to define.

The relationship between prison officers and prisoners here seems to the visitor like that between schoolmistress and pupil (which is no unfair simile). One is struck immediately by the way in which prisoners have continued to preserve individuality, even if only in the matter of hair styles! It is obviously recognized that preservation of individuality is closely linked with restoration of self-respect.

Reception routine is as with the men, except that where desirable the prisoner is immediately examined by the doctor. This applies to all cases of mothers with young children, pregnant women, and those who are exceptionally distressed.

The prison, with its population of some five hundred, has three doctors (the Governor herself is a doctor, though she does not function in that capacity) and a psychiatric social worker, as well as visiting specialists in psychiatry. There is a very well-equipped hospital with maternity wards which differs little from any other hospital.

Many babies are born in Holloway, yet not one will bear the stigma on its birth certificate, for the address, while perfectly correct, will give no indication of the nature of the building. One woman declared that her only difficult confinement was with the one child born out of prison. She had five!

Babies remain with their mothers up to the age of nine months, after which they go out to relatives or other suitable homes. When the mother leaves the prison hospital she has her baby beside her in a cot in her cell. During working hours the children are left in what might be described as a day nursery.

Laundry, kitchens, and workshops provide occupation at Holloway. A branch of a wireless factory, maintained by an outside firm but staffed with prisoners, is also installed there. Mail-bags, machine-knitted socks for Borstal and prison garments are among the work-hour products of the prison, but handicraft classes produce a variety of rather more attractive goods including slippers, gloves, and table sets. So far ingenuity has been able to overcome the restrictions imposed by coupons and shortages. One particularly smart product is a shopping bag made of string and the cardboard tops of milk bottles!

While male prisoners rely for such entertainments as are permitted on outside talent, the women do much to provide their own. Holloway has produced its own revue, directed by a professional who was herself a 'guest' there. All forms of dancing are popular.

The prisoners here, as elsewhere, are entitled to earn small sums which may be spent on luxuries. Cigarettes are in most demand.

The vast majority of women prisoners have been convicted for acquiring other people's property by illegal means: others (in equal

proportions at the present time) are serving sentences for sex offences and abortion.

Different classes of prisoners are distinguished by the ties worn with the regulation dress: blue for recidivists, red for Star¹ class, grey for convicts, and brown for young prisoners.

Most famous—or notorious—of English prisons is Dartmoor. It accommodates at present (its future is uncertain) convicts of the Ordinary class.

To the motorist, Dartmoor may seem no more than a passing variety of English country scenery, for a fast car on the good roads can shrink its vastness to a pleasant interlude between two meals. The convict sees another aspect of it, and finds most of its moods unkind—white, obliterating mist, driving rain, bitter cold, or pitiless sun. At Wandsworth he can feel that the life of London flows by outside the walls, but on the Moor he is cut off utterly from the society he has offended.

The building of Dartmoor Prison was begun in 1806 and completed three years later at a cost of some £70,000. At first it accommodated French prisoners of war, and unpopular as it was, the prisoners preferred it to the hulks of Plymouth.

In 1812 and 1813 American prisoners up to a thousand were added to the population. The two nationalities did not always achieve harmony, and there were nearly fifty casualties after one encounter. The honours went to the Americans, though unarmed, they faced a bombardment of stones from the Frenchmen. Following the repatriation of French after the Napoleonic wars, over five thousand American prisoners were confined at Dartmoor.

After the departure of the prisoners of war—American and French—the building fell into decay, and it was not until 1850 that it was repaired at a cost of £26,000 to accommodate 1,300 convicts.

In 1815 there was a riot among the American prisoners at Dartmoor, turned into tragedy by a cry of 'Fire'. Whether this order was in fact given by the Governor is in doubt, but the soldiers did actually open fire causing many casualties, some fatal. In January of 1932 a mutiny broke out among the English convicts who had a variety of grievances, real or imaginary. For a time mob-law prevailed and stones were used to smash windows and to assault members of the prison staff. The fire-engine was destroyed and fires started in the buildings, the flames being fed with the prison records. The central block was destroyed.

The mutiny was quelled at last. Some twenty-four officers were injured, four seriously. Among the convicts there were forty-one casualties, twenty-three of them suffering from baton wounds, and seven from shot wounds. At the subsequent trial sixteen men were found guilty of mali-

¹ Star prisoners of both sexes are, with exceptions, those not previously convicted. Others pass to the Ordinary class. Convicts are those serving sentences of three years or over.

cious damage, five of riotous assembly and one of causing grievous bodily harm to a prison officer. Sentences ranged from twelve years' penal servitude to six months.

In the early days of Dartmoor as a convict prison there were many escapes, the convicts taking advantage of the frequent fogs which blot out the moors. Some were never recaptured. Escapes are still attempted, but wireless and cars usually curtail hard-won liberty. In 1941 a prisoner at 'The Moor' succeeded not only in escaping but in retaining his liberty for six months. He had previously escaped from two other prisons and two police-stations.

The only penalty for the supreme crime of murder in England is death by hanging—a method considered at least as humane as any other.

The condemned man is lodged in a special cell which is larger and more comfortable than the ordinary cell, and two prison officers are in constant attendance, day and night. He is provided with games, books, and papers, and is not required to do any work. Special facilities are allowed for visits from friends, relatives, and legal advisers, though all interviews must be within sight and hearing of a prison officer.

Strictly speaking, the term 'hanging' is a misnomer, for death is caused by a measured drop, the necessary length of slack rope being calculated from the prisoner's height and weight. When the trap bolt is released, the body falls for the length of the rope and the sudden jerk dislocates the neck.

To-day, executions take place privately within prison walls, usually at eight o'clock in the morning—hence 'The eight o'clock walk'. Execution for treason may still legally take place in public.

The method has been criticized on the grounds that death is not instantaneous, for cases have been recorded where the heart continued to beat for twenty minutes or more. But, under favourable conditions, heart muscle will continue its rhythmic contractions for an indefinite period quite independent of the functioning of the other organs, and even when removed from the body.

To deprive a human being of life is in any circumstances a dreadful business, and in England in peace-time is inflicted only on those who have merited it by themselves committing that very act.

There are, under English law, no degrees of murder, and the death sentence *must* be pronounced on an accused person convicted of the crime. Recommendations to mercy by the jury are carefully considered afterwards, and the whole case is reviewed before sentence is carried out.

The number of murders committed in a year seldom exceeds a hundred,* and the number of convicted murderers hanged seldom exceeds a quarter that figure.

*1947.

It is only fair to conclude this chapter with a tribute to the officers of H.M. Prison Service. All too often they are the butt of writer and cartoonist who represent them as grim-faced, harsh disciplinarians. Doubtless there are exceptions to the general rule, but the general rule is that those who enter the Service have exceptional understanding and wide humanity. From the Governor to the youngest member of the prison staff their motto is: "There but for the Grace of God . . ."

From time to time ex-convicts produce their reminiscences and rail against the prison system and those who administer it. No system, and no human, is perfect, but it is generally true to say that these complaints are made by those justly punished, because they wish to draw attention to themselves—a vanity that probably led to their conviction in the first place.

CHAPTER XX

POLICE, PRESS, AND PUBLIC

A FRENCH writer once described the police as the natural enemies of the public.

In Continental countries they have often been used (and in some cases still are!) to suppress liberty and to impose the will of an individual or a small section of the community on the people by force of arms, secret arrests, and imprisonment without trial.

In England such a state of affairs has never prevailed. Originally, as reference to Chapter II will show, the police were ordinary members of the public, elected or appointed for the common good, and this principle has never altered.

The English policeman is traditionally the champion of the people's rights, and it is part of his duties to be a friend of every law-abiding citizen. He can neither imprison the guilty (though he must bring them to trial) nor can he serve one section to the neglect or detriment of the rest.

The author himself has seen a prominent member of an extreme political party being given police protection after a rowdy meeting at which he had assailed the Government of the day in no uncertain terms.

Never before has co-operation between police and public been closer than to-day. The police in general, and Scotland Yard in particular, have thrown down as many barriers of secrecy as it is in the public interest to do.

And this policy has already paid handsome dividends. During the closing months of the war the crime experts estimated that crime would reach its peak in 1948, and already crime is beginning to decline.¹ Not because the forecasts were wrong or because the factors that make for increased crime are absent, but because the public has been educated to be 'crime minded' and to make use of the facilities provided for getting in touch with the police the second a felony is suspected.

Immediately after the close of the war in Europe the crime curve began to rise for reasons that have been set out elsewhere in this book. The police forces were everywhere under strength, the forces of disorder were growing, goods in short supply offered tempting prizes.

One valuable link had already been forged between police and public, and that was the '999' telephone system. Its use had steadily increased and the number of arrests made possible by its use had increased proportionately.

In 1945 the Yard forged a second link with the public by the

¹ In 1947.

establishment of a Public Information Office with Mr. P. H. Fearnley at its head.

For some years now large organizations, public and commercial, have realized the value of special departments which will keep the public informed of their activities. In the case of commercial concerns this is, of course, no more than a subtle method of encouraging the public to make more purchases or fuller use of services. In the case of public organizations it promotes fuller understanding and keener appreciation of the value of those things for which the public has, directly or indirectly, to pay. At a time when there is marked progress towards public ownership, the 'owner' is entitled to full explanations of how and why his money is being spent.

Scotland Yard provides a public service, and the public is justified in wishing to know what it receives for its not inconsiderable contribution. This information is now supplied up to the limit of public security—it would be unwise, for example, to disclose the methods employed to trap warehouse-breakers—but the Public Information Office performs an even more important function by keeping the public informed of the methods, new and old, of criminals, and by teaching how prompt and intelligent co-operation may reduce crime and increase the security of life and property.

It has been proved, if proof were necessary, that information must be poured out in a constant stream. Warnings against one particular form of crime and advice for its prevention have an immediate effect in reducing that form of crime, but the lesson is soon forgotten. The public has to be trained until the appropriate reaction to a suspected felony becomes almost instinctive. At the same time a reasonable balance must be maintained between co-operation with the police and interference with the public. Any tendency towards turning us into a nation of 'noses' and 'narks' and encouraging us to suspect and spy on our neighbours would be disastrous at a time when the privacy of the individual can already be invaded by a host of officials.

Such a balance the Public Information Office of the Yard has so far most happily achieved. It has shown itself alive to all the modern media for passing information, and it has put its points before the public in a manner that is explanatory, interesting, and at times as exciting as any thriller.

It has reached millions of homes via the B.B.C. with its graphic examples of criminal tricks and habits; it has driven home the lessons by means of films, posters, and statistics.

And it has obtained results.

By telling the public what it can do to control and reduce crime—with the '999' system always in the foreground—the number of arrests has steadily soared. In the first five months of 1947 there was a record number of 28,000 calls—more than in the whole twelve months of 1941, 1942, 1943, and 1944. And still the figures climb. In March of

1947 there were 586 arrests, in April 588, and in May 677. During the first year of the '999' system there were between three and four thousand calls. In 1946 there were five thousand a *month*, and in 1947 this rose to six thousand.

While in the vast majority of cases action by members of the public has been justified, it has not always led to an arrest or even to the discovery of a felony. A man loitering in the shadows may be innocently waiting for his girl; a gas, water, or electric light inspector may really have forgotten his identity card.

The effects of publicity have worked within the police organization as well as outside: greater efficiency and greater mobility has not only enabled it to keep pace with the increased calls from the public but to decrease the gap between calls and arrests. The percentage of arrests for the number of calls received has increased and is still increasing.

New methods of publicity are still being tried. Radio Olympia this year will not only reveal the secrets of the Yard's Information Room to the public, but will allow them to test its workings for themselves. It is proposed to reproduce the Room in miniature at the exhibition and to erect a telephone kiosk from which the public may dial 999. Routine action (as described in another chapter) will then be put into operation complete with wireless car.

The Public Information Office does not deal solely with crime. It attacks from one angle the ever-increasing traffic problem by advice for the reduction of road accidents, and by the issue of information about routes and diversions on special occasions. In this work it has the close co-operation of the A.A. and the R.A.C.

The day may soon come—and the Yard is doing its best to hasten it—when the motorist, too, will regard the police as his friends and not his traditional enemies! In all fairness it must be remembered that the duty of a police officer is to see that the law is obeyed, whether in regard to burglary or to obstruction with an unattended car. Laws are made by Parliament and local by-laws are approved by Local Authorities, each composed of those elected by the votes of the community. The police officer is paid by the community to carry out its own regulations: he can neither make nor vary them, and if he neglected to enforce them he would be guilty of dereliction of duty.

Not least among the media employed by the Yard for advertising its services and inviting public help is the Press. Recently, for the first time in history, the Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis himself addressed a Press conference.

In the matter of what is strictly news, relations between Police and Press are traditionally happy. Long ago the Yard established a Press Bureau which issues bulletins and answers questions up to the limit of public interest. The Bureau does not confine itself to major matters, but is equally at the service of the local editor who wishes accurate information about an accident in his district.

There is seldom rivalry between Police and Press, and the crime reporter has a high reputation for respecting a confidence.

In the matter of crime news, each paper presents its reports to suit the tastes of its readers, and basically the reports are as accurate as information available at any given moment will allow. The serious student who requires a factual, uncoloured report will have no difficulty in choosing an appropriate journal. The vast majority of readers prefer crime stories to be presented in dramatic form to supply their psychological (and by no means unreasonable or unpleasant) needs. The cause and existence of these needs are not subject for discussion here, but they certainly exist.

What the English Press does *not* do is to indulge in lurid fantasy unsupported by fact. The good taste of editorial staffs, coupled with the operation of the laws on libel and indecency, refute the howls of 'gutterpress' and 'sensationalism' which sometimes arise from the pseudo-intellectuals.

THE DETECTIVE IN FACT AND FICTION

IN no other profession is there so wide a discrepancy between fact and fiction as in detecting, yet detective literature during the last fifty years has attained a popularity equalled only by the Western.

The detective of fact learns early that genius is an infinite capacity for taking pains, for noticing the unconsidered trifle, and above all, for making full use of the vast resources that Scotland Yard can place at his disposal.

The fiction detective, on the other hand, works alone as a general rule, be he amateur or regular. His deductions are brilliant—so brilliant that the reader is seldom allowed insight into his reasoning—he works by flashes of inspiration or intuition, and breaks every rule that is laid down for the guidance of his colleague in real life.

This is, of course, the fault of the reader as much of the author, for few readers would care to tackle a thriller that read like an official report with whole pages of facsimile reproductions from the Criminal Record Office.

Real detecting is, in other words, 10 per cent inspiration and 90 per cent perspiration. Its entertainment value is usually slight.

Some authors deliberately make a butt of the Yard man, using him as a foil for their own brilliant amateur. The Yard is used to such slights, and continues its policy of appointing its senior officers on merit. Many of the professional detectives of fiction would in practice have failed to pass their preliminary tests at Peel House: few would have been drafted into the Criminal Investigation Department.

The fiction writer has one valid excuse for choosing an amateur for his hero: the amateur is not bound by Judges' Rules, nor yet by the laws of the land. He can put the most improper questions to suspects and witnesses, he can break into private houses in his search for clues and get away with it without running any risk of dismissal or reprimand.

England, of course, has its private detectives, many of them retired C.I.D. officers, and they fill a very necessary function in society. That function does not include searching for murderers and other major criminals, nor have they any rights in the matter above the ordinary citizen. It is their duty to report at once to the police any breach of the law they may encounter during the course of their investigations.

In America the fiction writer has a great advantage in that private detectives have an official position; they are licensed by the police, and have definite rights to enquire into any case on behalf of any interested party that cares to employ them.

What, then, is the function of the English private detective?

Divorce comes, perhaps, first to mind, though divorce is not by any means the only subject for the investigator. Action for divorce is a civil and not a criminal matter, and the injured party is entitled to no help from the police. Evidence must be secured, and the private detective must exercise infinite patience, sometimes extending over months, before he has the information vital to his client.

Some interesting facts on the real work of the private investigator were supplied to the author by Messrs. A. G. and W. W. Selby, who have between them seventy years' experience as detectives.

Mr. W. W. Selby retired from the C.I.D. with the rank of Divisional Detective Inspector, having been a member of the original Flying Squad.

They recall one case in which they were requested to assist a foreign visitor of noble birth who had been caught in the toils of a clever black-mailer, a youth who had tricked him into a compromising situation, extracted a 'confession' and calmly robbed the apartment of jewellery and other valuables. Before leaving, the youth had demanded and received a cheque for £200, but the victim astutely post-dated it by a month. The youth was rash enough to ring up and make various threats and demands which enabled the investigators to trace him to a public-house. They called there together, decided on heroic measures and, grasping the youth, they marched him from the public-house to the nearest police-station. Salutes from a passing file of constables, who knew the two well, helped to convince the youth that he was in official hands, but it was not until they were right inside the police-station that he cracked and promised to restore the client's property. The 'confession' and all the property, except some gold that had been melted down, were recovered intact.

Another task which often falls to the lot of the private investigator is the tracing of missing persons, for it must be realized that to disappear is not necessarily an infringement of the law. So long as a person has committed no crime, has not left his dependents without means, nor is seeking to avoid the discharge of his dues, he has a perfect right to disappear. If friends or relatives have no reason to suspect that he or she is the victim of foul play, then the matter is not one for the police.

"We have never, during our long experience, had a clash with the regular police," said the Selbys. "On the other hand, our agents have often detected a felony while keeping observation, and have been the means of bringing the offender to justice.

"When the '999' system was introduced," they added, "our agents were often innocent victims, for some enthusiastic member of the public would see a man apparently loitering and would inform the Yard. Now, to avoid the removal of our men while on duty, we make a practice of notifying the nearest police-station that we intend to place a man on watch in their area."

Unlike the official detective, the private investigator has to concentrate the whole of his organization in his own office. He cannot call upon the services of the Criminal Record Office, nor can he rely on the support of every police officer in the kingdom. He cannot successfully pursue his quarry across London by car against traffic lights, for he has no authority to override regulations. Often an investigation that would occupy the police for three days will take him as many months of patient observation, of collecting the minutest scraps of information and of exercising shrewd psychology—the last a quality essential to success. The Selbys recall one investigation in which nine months were spent before a single tittle of evidence was secured.

Another class of real-life investigator is the store detective.

Thousands of pounds' worth of goods change hands annually in the stores of big cities without the customary transfer of money. Shoplifters are mostly responsible, though dishonest employees form a proportion of the thieves.

This work, too, is often in the capable hands of retired members of the C.I.D., who start with the advantages of an instinct for spotting wrongdoers and a knowledge of their methods.

The big gangs of shoplifters have been eliminated, in the opinion of Mr. 'Bob' Skelly, now in charge of the detective department of one of London's biggest stores and formerly an officer in the Flying Squad. It was Mr. Skelly who arrested Rouse, the notorious 'blazing car' murderer.

He recalls the time when the 'Elephant Gang' was responsible for shop thefts on a wholesale scale. With headquarters in the Elephant and Castle district of London, this gang would descend on large provincial shops and would work with perfect organization in which every member had his or her own part to play. The value of their days' hauls ran into hundreds before the gang was broken up.

To-day, he says, it is unusual to find more than two people working together, one to indulge in altercation with the assistant and so attract attention while the other steals. The vast majority of shoplifters are, however, women with no previous record, and most of these prove to have both money and coupons for the goods they have stolen. Often enough they betray their intentions by excessive nervousness and timid glances to right and left. Sometimes, when two women are working together, one will give every appearance of being about to steal in order to engage the attention of any detective who may be about, while the other takes the opportunity to remove goods unnoticed.

Most of the thefts seem to be due to sheer greed, though occasionally they are prompted by some strange mental kink—a very common phenomenon if one may believe defending solicitors. One woman who passed through Mr. Skelly's hands was irresistibly attracted by anything green.

The first of the great modern detectives of fact was Francois Eugene

Vidocq, a Parisian who for many years earned a substantial, if precarious, income by putting his hand in other people's pockets at the time of the French Revolution. Subsequently—no doubt to ensure a peaceful old age—Monsieur Vidocq turned police officer and utilized his unrivalled knowledge of the Paris underworld to send twenty thousand of his former colleagues to the guillotine and prisons. He retired in 1829 and wrote his memoirs.

The value of these memoirs as a basis for fiction was recognized in turn by Dumas, Hugo, Balzac, Wilkie Collins, and, above all, Emile Gaboriau, who produced *The Widow Lerouge* in 1866.

Gaboriau and Edgar Allen Poe, who created Dupin, the first detective to use the science of deduction, must be regarded as the parents of Sherlock Holmes with whom Conan Doyle popularized the scientific detective story. Holmes had for a godfather Dr. Joseph Bell, Conan Doyle's old master. This is what Dr. Bell himself wrote of the great detective and his creator in the *Bookman* fifty years ago.

"It is not entirely a bad sign of this weary, worn-out century that in this, its last decade, even the petty street-bred people are beginning, as the nurses say, to take notice. An insatiable and generally prurient curiosity as to the doings of the class immediately above us is pandered to by the society journals, and encouraged even by the daily newspapers. Such information is valueless intellectually, and tends to moral degradation; it exercises none of the senses, and pauperizes the imagination. Celebrities at home, illustrated interviews, society scandals on all levels merely titillate the itching ear of the gossip.

"Memoirs, recollections, anecdotes of the Bar or of the Academy are much more interesting, and may be valuable as throwing sidelights on history, but still only amuse and help to kill the time of which we forget the value. But in the last few years there has been a distinct demand for books which, to a certain poor extent, encourage thought and stimulate observation . . . interest is given to the crowded city's horrible street by the suggestions of crime and romance, of curiosity and its gratification, which we find written with more or less cleverness in the volumes of so-called detective literature under which the press groans. Every bookstall has its shilling shocker, and every magazine which aims at a circulation must have its mystery of robbery or murder. Most of these are poor enough stuff; complicated plots, which can be discounted in the first chapter, extraordinary coincidences, preternaturally gifted detectives, who make discoveries more or less useless by flashes of insight which no one else can understand, become wearisome in their sameness, and the interest, such as it is, centres only in the results and not in the methods. . . . Dr. Conan Doyle has made a well-deserved success for his detective stories, and made the name of his hero beloved . . . by the marvellous cleverness of his method. He shows how easy it is, if only you can observe, to find out a great deal as to the works and ways of

your innocent and unconscious friends, and, by an extension of the same method, to baffle the criminal and lay bare the manner of his crime. There is nothing new under the sun. Voltaire taught us the method of Zadig, and every good teacher of medicine or surgery exemplifies every day in his teaching and practice the method and its results. The precise and intelligent recognition and appreciation of minor differences is the real essential factor in all successful medical diagnosis. Carried into ordinary life, granted the presence of an insatiable curiosity and fairly acute senses, you have Sherlock Holmes as he astonishes his somewhat dense friend Watson; carried out in a specialized training, you have Sherlock Holmes the skilled detective.

"Mr. Conan Doyle's education as a student of medicine taught him how to observe, and his practice, both as a general practitioner and a specialist, has been a splendid training for a man such as he is, gifted with eyes, memory, and imagination. Eyes and ears which can see and hear, memory to record at once and to recall at pleasure the impressions of the senses, and an imagination capable of weaving a theory or piecing together a broken chain or unravelling a tangled clue, such are implements of his trade to a successful diagnostician. If in addition the doctor is also a born story-teller, then it is a mere matter of choice whether he writes detective stories or keeps his strength for a great historical romance as is the *White Company*. Syme, one of the greatest teachers of surgical diagnosis that ever lived, had a favourite illustration which, as a tradition of his school, has made a mark on Dr. Conan Doyle's method, 'Try to learn the features of a disease or injury as precisely as you know the features, the gait, the tricks of manner of your most intimate friend.' Him, even in a crowd, you can recognize at once; it may be a crowd of men dressed alike, and each having his complement of eyes, nose, hair, and limbs; in every essential they resemble each other, only in trifles do they differ; and yet, by knowing these trifles well, you make your diagnosis or recognition with ease. So it is with disease of mind or body or morals. Racial peculiarities, hereditary tricks of manner, accent, occupation or the want of it, education, environment of all kinds, by their little trivial impressions gradually mould or carve the individual, and leave finger-marks or chisel-scores which the expert can recognize. The great broad characteristics which at a glance can be recognized as indicative of heart disease or consumption, chronic drunkenness or long-continued loss of blood, are the common property of the veriest tyro in medicine, while to masters of their art there are myriads of signs eloquent and instructive, but which need the educated eye to detect. A fair-sized and valuable book has lately been written on the one symptom, the pulse; to any one but a trained physician it seems as much an absurdity as is Sherlock Holmes' immortal treatise on the one hundred and fourteen varieties of tobacco ash. The greatest stride that has been made of late years in preventive and diagnostic medicine consists in the recognition and differentiation by bacteriological research

of those minute organisms which disseminate cholera and fever, tubercle and anthrax. The importance of the infinitely little is incalculable. Poison a well at Mecca with the cholera bacillus, and the holy water which the pilgrims carry off in their bottles will infect a continent, and the rags of the victims of the plague will terrify every seaport in Christendom.

"Trained as he has been to notice and appreciate minute detail, Dr. Doyle saw how he could interest his intelligent readers by taking them into his confidence, and showing his mode of working. He created a shrewd, quick-sighted, inquisitive man, half doctor, half virtuoso, with plenty of spare time, a retentive memory, and perhaps with the best gift of all—the power of unloading the mind of all the burden of trying to remember unnecessary details. Holmes tells Watson: 'A man should keep his little brain-attic stocked with all the furniture that he is likely to use, as the rest he can put away in the lumber-room of his library, where he can get it if he wants it.' But to him the petty results of environment, the sign-manuals of labour, the stains of trade, the incidents of travel, have living interest, as they tend to satisfy an insatiable, almost inhuman because impersonal, curiosity. He puts the man in the position of an amateur, and therefore irresponsible, detective, who is consulted in all sorts of cases, and then he lets us see how he works. He makes him explain to the good Watson the trivial, or apparently trivial, links in his chain of evidence. These are at once so obvious, when explained, and so easy, once you know them, that the ingenuous reader at once feels, and says to himself, I also could do this; life is not so dull after all; I will keep my eyes open, and find out things. The gold watch, with its scratched keyhole and pawnbrokers' marks, told such an easy tale about Watson's brother. The dusty old billy-cock hat revealed that its master had taken to drinking some years ago, and had got his hair cut yesterday. The tiny thorn-prick and fearsome foot-mark of the thing that was neither a child nor a monkey enabled Holmes to identify and capture the Andaman Islander. Yet, after all, you say, there is nothing wonderful; we could all do the same.

"The experienced physician and the trained surgeon every day, in their examinations of the humblest patients, have to go through a similar process of reasoning, quick or slow according to the personal equations of each, almost automatic in the experienced man, laboured and often erratic in the tyro, yet requiring just the same simple requisites, senses to notice facts, and education and intelligence to apply them. Mere acuteness of the senses is not enough. Your Indian tracker will tell you that the footprint on the leaves was not a redskin's, but a pale-face's, because it marked a shoe-print, but it needs an expert in shoe-leather to tell where that shoe was made. A sharp-eyed detective may notice the thumb-mark of a grimy or bloody hand on the velvet or the mirror, but it needs all the scientific knowledge of a Galton to render the ridges and furrows of the stain visible and permanent, and then to

identify by their sign-manual the suspected thief or murderer. Sherlock Holmes has acute senses, and the special education and information that make these valuable; and he can afford to let us into the secrets of his method. But in addition to the creation of his hero, Dr. Conan Doyle in this remarkable series of stories has proved himself a born story-teller. He has had the wit to devise excellent plots, interesting complications; he tells them in honest Saxon-English with directness and pith; and, above all his other merits, his stories are absolutely free from padding. He knows how delicious brevity is, how everything tends to be too long, and he has given us stories that we can read at a sitting between dinner and coffee, and we have not a chance to forget the beginning before we reach the end. The ordinary detective story, from Gaboriau or Boigobey down to the latest shocker, really needs an effort of memory quite misplaced to keep the circumstances of the crimes and all the wrong scents of the various meddlers before the wearied reader. Dr. Doyle never gives you a chance to forget an incident or miss a point."

Crime fiction has never looked back since the days of Sherlock Holmes' first bow to the public in 1891.

To-day, in spite of gloomy prognostications, the detective story flourishes as never before. Its social value is incontestable, for it allows its reader to experience vicariously a release of primitive—and anti-social—emotions and to go about his daily dull duties a more or less satisfied citizen.

Readers (and authors) to-day owe a great debt to Mr. Ernest Dudley and the British Broadcasting Corporation for the 'Armchair Detective' who offers his weekly selection of crime to their library lists from a knowledge born of experience that grows literally from day to day.

Here is what Mr. Dudley himself says:

"The 'Armchair Detective' programme first went on the air in the middle of World War II. I'd had the idea kicking about in my mind for about a year before I tried it out and, owing to lack of air time during the war years, it started off as a ten-minute spot and ran for over a year as a weekly programme.

"After the war it returned as a twenty-minute feature and has been running ever since with a brief Summer holiday which enables me to take a holiday to recuperate from reading something like half a dozen to a dozen thrillers a week!

"The 'Armchair Detective' programme gives a review, with dramatized excerpts, of new thrillers, spy stories and straight detective fiction. In other words, the programme caters catholically for the crime fan. It's really a review of this type of fiction except that I have with me actors who dramatize a thrilling episode from each book. It is these episodes, with their atmospheric music and sensational climaxes, that

have collected a weekly audience of ten million listeners. The programme initially attracted readers of crime fiction exclusively. But now it's increased its listeners to those who listen to the dramatic episodes for their sensational and thrill value—their curiosity regarding the end of each novel cannot possibly be satisfied. This will be understood when it is realized that owing to book production restrictions in this country the books in the programme can reach only a quarter of a million of the ten million regular listeners to the 'Armchair Detective'.

"It is generally agreed that Conan Doyle was the first to popularize the detective story in this country and America. Since then the Sherlock Holmes' type of scientific amateur detective has become almost a stock character for many crime fiction writers. To-day, as well as the private detective, the factual Scotland Yard official has been popularized. And then there is the two-fisted, thick-ear type of thriller which gets along without the mystery puzzle angle.

"Following Doyle came Baroness Orczy with her *Old Man in the Corner* detective stories, and G. K. Chesterton with his *Father Brown* priest-detective. But Dorothy L. Sayers probably brought the amateur detective to his height of polished popularity and perfection with her famous amateur sleuth, Lord Peter Wimsey.

"Edgar Wallace, with his prolific output, undoubtedly did much to popularize the police novel, and Freeman Wills Crofts, with his detective stories featuring Inspector French, also contributed considerably to this aspect of the mystery story.

"To-day: Agatha Christie, with her famous Belgian detective, Hercule Poirot; John Creasey with his amateur detective and also police novels; and Peter Cheyney, with his private investigator detective characters, stand out as popular exponents of these three types of crime fiction.

"The trend of British detective-story writers seems to be either realistic police novels or mysteries featuring original leading characters; the difficulty, of course, being to get a new slant on an original sleuth. The old idea that the Scotland Yard man is a dumb cluck and merely a stooge for the smart amateur is now definitely discarded. The writer of police novels has to get his Scotland Yard facts and methods of investigating crime correct. On the other hand, if he writes the 'amateur' or 'private enquiry agent' type of story, he must develop an original human character, usually with a comedy angle and a sophisticated love interest. As for the melodramatic thriller, these sort of stories will continue to depend upon action and suspense and that robust style of narration which carries a reader along without giving him much time to work out the probabilities of the plot.

"Father Ronald Knox, himself a well-known writer of crime fiction and a critic of detective stories, recently declared that mystery fiction was finished. It is interesting, not to say amusing, to note that this opinion was put forward in an article appearing in the *London Academy*

magazine published on December 30, 1905. An excerpt from this article, entitled 'The Passing of the Detective in Literature', goes like this:

" 'The detective in literature is hardly more than fifty years old, but already he is passing into decay. He has enjoyed extraordinary popularity and may even claim to be the one person equally beloved by statesmen and errand boys. His old achievements enthrall as ever. But he makes no new conquests. From henceforth he retires into limbo with the dodo and the District Railway trains. He carries with him the respect of the civilized world.' "

Mr. John Creasey, on whom the mantles of Edgar Wallace, Hornung, and others have surely descended, has the following comments to make on detectives of fiction.

"In any police force, I suppose, there are as many different types of detectives as, in the medical profession, there are different types of doctors and surgeons. So with the fictional detective. My own, in the early days, were large-limbed, broad-shouldered young men who succeeded, by a series of lightning deductions based on slender clues and after a series of near misses, reach a triumphant solution. This tradition, as it were, lingers in my recent work, although I like to think that I have evolved three satisfactory 'types'. I claim no great originality for them, but each, in his different way, reflects my own view of what such a 'person' should be.

"Take, for instance, my 'Toff', the amateur. He is, of course, an eligible lesser member of the nobility, he is wealthy, has a conscience, is good-looking and likeable, has an eye for a pretty woman and is equally at home in Mayfair's select society circles, the *demi-monde* and the East End of London. And, of course, he mixes well at a country house party and can get along quite nicely in Paris or New York. People like him—fictional people, I mean! He has two characteristics which are common to my other 'types'; he has likeability and he contrasts—as he is intended to!—with all the other main characters in the books. Oh, yes, and he makes mistakes; after much tribulation, I learned that my detectives *must* make mistakes or readers would simply get bored with them. Also the Toff suffers occasionally from the common cold, irritability, unreasonableness and all those personal fads and fancies which are intended to make him nearer a character than a caricature.

"Or take Inspector 'Handsome' West. He is married, and in all his books the domestic scenes are intended to show the human side of the man. (Incidentally his two children are real, and their antics as well as their names coincide with those of my own two youngsters!) West mixes well, but is much more the work-a-day detective than the Toff. Being attached to Scotland Yard, he cannot do the outrageous things that the Toff gets away with. His routine work has to be reasonably

accurate and he has passed the somewhat severe test of being read by active (as well as retired) C.I.D. men who have testified to the general accuracy and the propriety of what he does on the job, while picking out some gaffes.

“My third ‘type’ is Dr. Palfrey, Secret Service and all that. He has wider scope than either of the others—a secret agent can, traditionally, get away with anything. He isn’t particularly handsome, but has one thing in common with West and the Toff—he’s human. That is to say, he’s subject to the fancies and foibles and minor bothers of men. I’ve come to believe that this naturalness is important to a fictional sleuth, more important even than his detective ‘genius’, for it saves him from being a know-all, a bore or a bombastic and conceited oaf.

“As a detective, several things are vital for each of these three: he must know the ropes of police and court procedure; if he touches medical jurisprudence or forensic medicines or chemistry he must be accurate (*vide* text-books, my own knowledge being scanty). Hence the great value of some visits to New Scotland Yard, to local police stations and criminal courts for all who want to ‘create’ such a character. My general approach to the subject, however, can perhaps best be summed up by this revelation: the review in my collection which warms my heart most came from *Punch*, and says: ‘. . . West is a *likeable* young slop’. My italics!”

Another writer of the younger school, Miss Nancy Spain, has already made her mark for her breezy characterization and original style which blends subtle humour with equally subtle irony.

Of her work she writes:

“A detective in fiction should be colourful, arresting, even irritating. If he is to go on for long (one supposes it is the dream of every crime writer to invent money makers like Holmes, Wimsey, Fortune or Alleyn) he must be very real and every detail of his horrible life must be known to the author. And of interest to the public.

“Murders do not happen among cosy types at all. It is a most immoral suggestion that they should. They happen among neurotics, sex maniacs and other low characters. Therefore a man of plain common sense moving through a terrifying gallery of ballet dancers, tennis players, overwrought school teachers or whathaveyou, is, any way, in a good situation. His comments, possibly in Cockney, possibly in Chicago on the high-flung language of the pseudo-intellectual or specialist might be very funny.

“Against these people he should be solid and comfortable. Not boring.

“Johnny DuVivien happened because my original pick for the detective in *Poison in Play*, sports editor Jack Priestman, became so boring he nearly killed me. Here the Yard comes in, or rather doesn’t

come in. Had I possessed at that time (1943) any knowledge about the Yard at all, I might have produced a Plain Man from New Scotland Yard. As it was I was lying on my back in a Naval Hospital, with a high temperature, definitely unable to brush up my criminology.

"At this point in the book I remembered a very nice character who had been my Station Leader in the A.R.P. back in the phoney war. He had been an All-In Wrestler. He was about sixty. He was very good-looking. He had also (under various lovely names like Iron Steel) been a circus strong man in three continents. He was full of tales about How he Won the Gold Belt for Ju Jitsu, and all that. He was, in fact, just the job.

"Anyone who is really interested, which heaven forbid, will find him in a book I wrote when I was in the Navy called *Thank You, Nelson*. He comes in that for two and a half minutes with a broom, and I think he is called DuVoiser.

"He had a beautiful wife, but not like Natasha. She is my sister, except, of course, my sister doesn't talk broken English. The style is, however, somehow the same and she looks that way. Which is very nice for her.

"The Yard should be neither butt nor a deadly serious business. There is no reason why the police shouldn't be human, making mistakes or brilliant deductions, same as other people. Unless I become a lady policewoman (and I am not sure (a) my record is clean enough or (b) I have the right number of credits in School Certificate) I shall never be able to bring in the Yard (God bless it) at all."

Equally original in a different way is the *Black Maria* of Mr. John Slate.

Mr. Slate has quite definite opinions of what a detective of fiction should be. He says:

"It seems to me that there is a good deal to be said for both types of detective—the man from the Yard, and the amateur investigator, though without a doubt the first type of character is by far the more convincing since in real life one very rarely finds an amateur *detective*, though there are of course hundreds of amateurs who do a spot of 'arm-chair' solving.

"In general, I should imagine the detective from the Yard should—as near as it is within the author's power to make him so—behave exactly like a real-life person, have the same foibles, the same little worries, the same home background: in other words be entirely human. Where I have found it necessary to create a man from the Yard myself, I have tried to get as far away as possible from a bowler-hatted, iron-jawed character and create a man whose main passion in life is gardening and walking, a very human trend which lends to him the nickname of 'The Crimson Rambler'. Since, for instance, Chief Inspector Chapman

of Scotland Yard is known as 'The Cherub', there is nothing very remarkable in this.

"Certainly in dealing with a police inspector he should be as human as possible, and this seems to include a tremendous patience (borne of his work), a sense of humour, and any odd habit from straightening his tie to wearing a remarkable hat.

"On the side of the amateur detectives it has been said that these characters are only dragged in because the author does not understand real police procedure. In some ways this is an unfair criticism because there are many authors who *do* understand police procedure, yet who find an amateur detective more useful in that the amateur can go where the professional dare not (for reasons of red tape). Many detective story plots are so formed that only somebody outside the law can take the necessary liberties to solve them. For this reason I created the character of Black Maria, the headmistress-detective, whose passion in life is criminology. Her chief endeavour is not to make the police look idiotic but point out to them certain facts which—as an outsider—are obvious to her but not to them. I can think of no person better qualified to ferret out problems than an educated headmistress, whose range of knowledge includes a good grounding in most subjects.

"So then, I have faith in either the amateur sleuth or the professional. As a reader of detective fiction, and not a writer, I make only one stipulation—and that is that the chief investigating character at least be *entertaining*. There is nothing that exasperates me more than a detective who follows a dull routine of questioning, never smiles, and never makes a mistake. For an all-time tip-top, quasi-crazy investigator commend me to Carter Dixon's Sir Henry Merrivale!"

The examples chosen above scarcely touch on the fringe of the subject, and no slight is intended on the hundreds of able writers not mentioned.

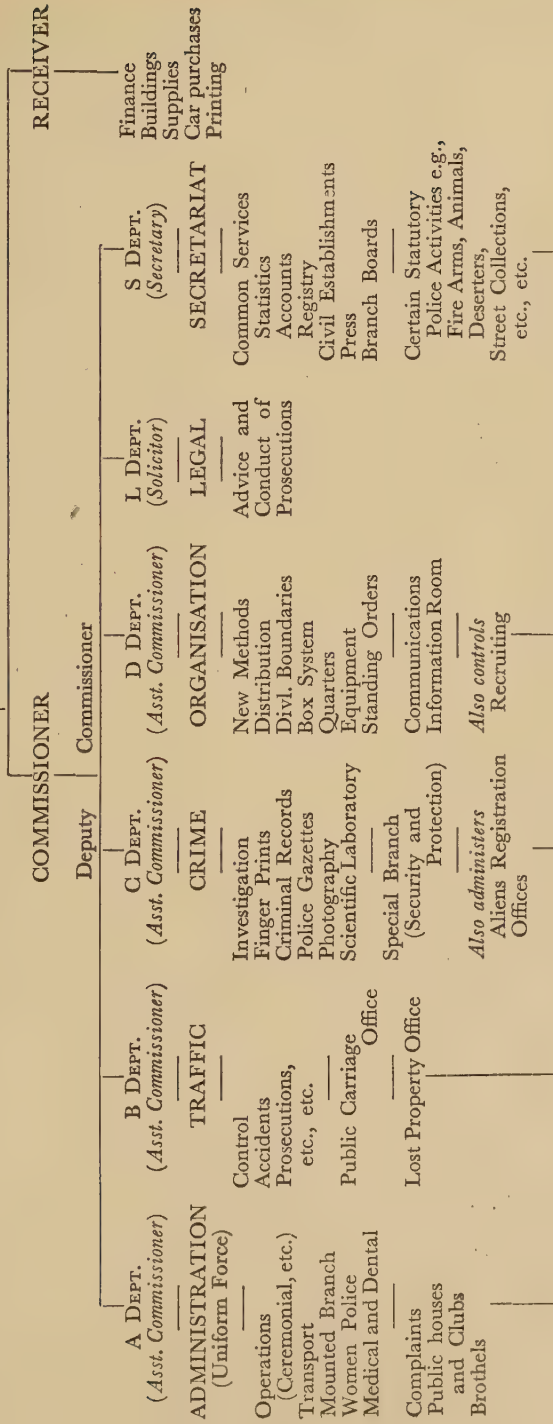
The standard of detective fiction improves year by year as the public learn more and more about how the police combat crime.

If and when crime comes to be regarded as a disease and not a voluntary act, crime thrillers may be banned as contrary to public interest.

It will need much ingenuity to fill the gaps in the bookshelf!

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR HOME AFFAIRS
(*Police Authority for the Metropolitan Police District*)

APPENDIX I



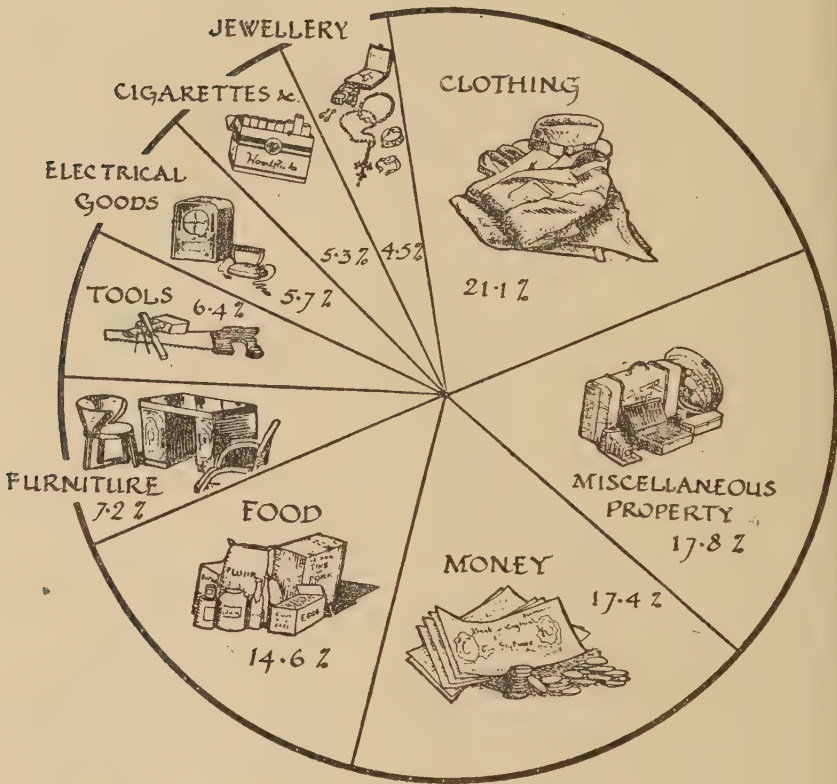
OFFICERS IN CHARGE

4 Districts	..	Deputy Assistant Commissioners
23 Divisions	..	Superintendents
85 Sub-Divisions	..	Sub-Divisional Inspectors
176 Stations	..	Inspectors and Sergeants

Note.

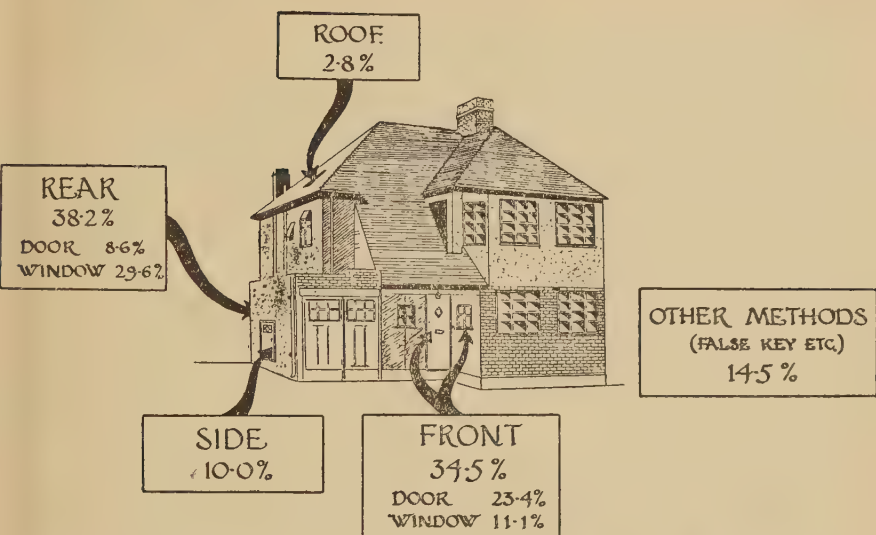
The Staff in A, B, C and D Depts. is partly Police and partly Civilian. In L and S Depts. it is wholly Civilian.

❖ SHOPBREAKING. ❖



TYPES OF PROPERTY STOLEN

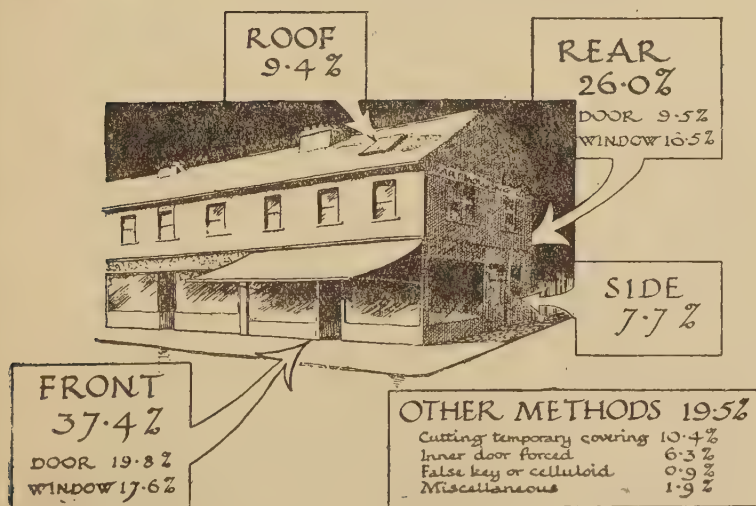
Courtesy of Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis



BURGLARY AND HOUSEBREAKING

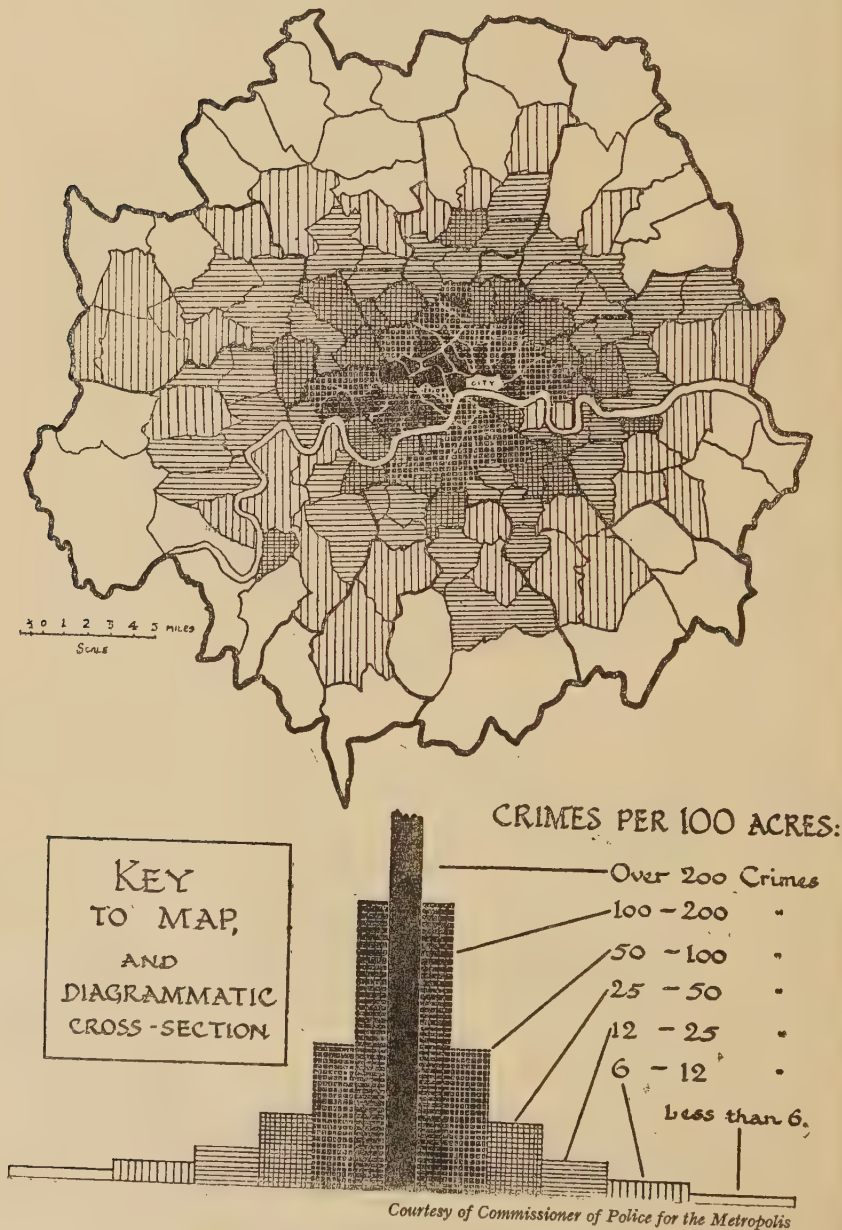
Methods of Entry

SHOPBREAKING



Courtesy of Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis

METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT.
 DENSITY OF INDICTABLE CRIME
 WITHIN POLICE STATION AREAS
 IN THE LATTER SIX MONTHS OF 1945.



CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

THE manuscript of this work was delivered before the House of Commons had decided, by a free vote, to suspend the infliction of the death penalty for five years. At the time of publication there is still no legislation on the matter, but all those sentenced to death have been reprieved since the decision was made. At the moment the sentence of death is passed in an abridged form without the Judge assuming the black cap—"You shall be hanged according to Law, unless the King should otherwise order."

It is still far too early to comment on the results of abolishing the supreme penalty; indeed, it is by no means certain that the abolition will be accepted. The author hopes to review the position in a further work on the English Police, now in course of preparation.

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